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THE LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN WATSON, D.D.

BY J. WATSON, D.D. IN A LETTER TO THE REV. J. WATSON, D.D.

THE
LETTERS
OF
HORACE WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD:

INCLUDING
NUMEROUS LETTERS NOW FIRST PUBLISHED
FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

1778 — 1797.

LONDON:

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THE present Volume will be found to contain upwards of one hundred letters, introduced into no former edition of the Correspondence of Horace Walpole. The greater part of them were written between the years 1789 and 1797, and were addressed to the Miss Berrys, during their residence in Italy. They embrace most of the leading events of the first five years of the French Revolution; and wherever the facts detailed in the letters have appeared to require elucidation or confirmation, the Editor has generally had recourse to M. Thiers's useful "History" of that great event; which has recently appeared in an English dress, accompanied with notes and illustrations, drawn from the most authentic sources.

While the last sheets of this volume were going to press, the Editor was favoured with a Letter from the Right Honourable Sir Charles Grey, relative to the share which he considers Mr. Walpole to have had in the composition and publication of the Letters of Junius.

Albany Street, Regent's Park,
October 28, 1840.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE LETTERS ADDRESSED TO THE
MISS BERRYS.

To the first edition of Lord Orford's works, which was published the year after he died, no memoir of his life was prefixed : his death was too recent, his life and character too well known, his works too popular, to require it. His political Memoirs, and the collections of his Letters which have been subsequently published, were edited by persons, who, though well qualified for their task in every other respect, have failed in their account of his private life, and their appreciation of his individual character, from the want of a personal acquaintance with their author.

The life contained in Sir Walter Scott's Biographical Sketches of the English Novelists labours under the same disadvantages. He had never seen Lord Orford, nor even lived much with such of his intimates and contemporaries in society as survived him.

Lord Dover, who has so admirably edited the first part of his correspondence with Sir Horace Mann, knew Lord Orford only by having been carried sometimes, when a boy, by his father Lord Clifden to Strawberry Hill. His editorial labours with these letters were the last occupation of his accomplished mind, and were pursued while his

body was fast sinking under the complication of disease, which so soon after deprived society of one of its most distinguished members, the arts of an enlightened patron, and his intimates of an amiable and attaching friend. Of the meagreness and insufficiency of his memoir of Lord Orford's life prefixed to the letters, he was himself aware, and expressed to the author of these pages his inability then to improve it, and his regret that circumstances had deprived him, while it was yet time, of the assistance of those who could have furnished him with better materials. His account of the latter part of Lord Orford's life is deficient in details, and sometimes erroneous as to dates. He appears likewise to have been unacquainted with some of his writings, and the circumstances which led to and accompanied them. In the present publication these deficiencies are supplied from notes, in the hands of the writer, left by Lord Orford, of the dates of the principal events of his own life, and of the writing and publication of all his works. It is only to be regretted that his autobiography is so short, and so entirely confined to dates.

In estimating the character of Lord Orford, and in the opinion which he gives of his talents, Lord Dover has evinced much candour and good taste. He praises with discrimination, and draws no unfair inferences from the peculiarities of a character with which he was not personally acquainted.

It is by the Review of the Letters to Sir Horace Mann, that the severest condemnation has been

passed and the most unjust impressions given, not only of the genius and talents, but of the heart and character, of Lord Orford. The mistaken opinions of the eloquent and accomplished author of that review are to be traced chiefly to the same causes which defeated the intentions of the two first biographers. In his case, these causes were increased, not only by no acquaintance with his subject, but by still farther removal from the fashions, the social habits, the little minute details, of the age to which Horace Walpole belongs,—an age so essentially different from the business, the movement, the important struggles, of that which claims the critic as one of its most distinguished ornaments. A conviction that these reasons led to his having drawn up, from the supposed evidence of Walpole's works alone, a character of their author so entirely and offensively unlike the original, has forced the pen into the feeble and failing hand of the writer of these pages,—has imposed the pious duty of attempting to rescue, by incontrovertible facts acquired in long intimacy, the memory of an old and beloved friend, from the giant grasp of an author and a critic from whose judgment, when deliberately formed, few can hope to appeal with success. The candour, the good-nature of this critic,—the inexhaustible stores of his literary acquirements, which place him in the first rank of those most distinguished for historical knowledge and critical acumen,—will allow him, I feel sure, to forgive this appeal from his hasty and general opinion, to the judgment of his better informed mind, on the

peculiarities of a character often remarkably dissimilar from that of his works.

Lord Dover has justly and forcibly remarked, “that what did the most honour both to the head and the heart of Horace Walpole, was the friendship which he bore to Marshal Conway; a man who, according to all the accounts of him that have come down to us, was so truly worthy of inspiring such a degree of affection.”¹

He then quotes the character given of him by the editor of Lord Orford’s works in 1798. This character of Marshal Conway was a portrait drawn from the life, and, as it proceeded from the same pen which now traces these lines, has some right to be inserted here. “It is only those who have had the opportunity of penetrating into the most secret motives of his public conduct, and into the inmost recesses of his private life, who can do real justice to the unsullied purity of his character;—who saw and knew him in the evening of his days, retired from the honorable activity of a soldier and of a statesman, to the calm enjoyments of private life; happy in the resources of his own mind, and in the cultivation of useful science, in the bosom of domestic peace—un-enriched by pensions or places—undistinguished by titles or ribbons—unsophisticated by public life, and unwearied by retirement.”

To *this* man, Lord Orford’s attachment, from their boyish days at Eton school to the death of

¹ Sketch of the Life of Horace Walpole, by Lord Dover. See vol. i. p. 14.

Marshal Conway in 1795, is already a circumstance of sufficiently rare occurrence among men of the world. Could such a man, of whom the foregoing lines are an unvarnished sketch—of whose character, simplicity was one of the distinguished ornaments—could such a man have endured the intimacy of such an individual as the reviewer describes Lord Orford to have been? Could an intercourse of uninterrupted friendship and undiminished confidence have existed between them during a period of nearly sixty years, undisturbed by the business and bustle of middle life, so apt to cool, and often to terminate, youthful friendships? Could such an intercourse *ever* have existed, with the supposed selfish indifference, and artificial coldness and conceit of Lord Orford's character?

The last correspondence included in the present publication will, it is presumed, furnish no less convincing proof, that the warmth of his feelings, and his capacity for sincere affection, continued unenfeebled by age. It is with this view, and this alone, that the correspondence alluded to is now, for the first time, given to the public. It can add nothing to the already established epistolary fame of Lord Orford, and the public can be as little interested in his sentiments for the two individuals addressed. But, in forming a just estimate of his character, the reader will hardly fail to observe, that those sentiments were entertained at a time of life when, for the most part, the heart is too little capable of expansion to open to new attachments. The whole tone of these letters must prove the

unimpaired warmth of his feelings, and form a striking contrast to the cold harshness of which he has been accused, in his intercourse with Madame du Deffand, at an earlier period of his life. This harshness, as was noticed by the editor of Madame du Deffand's letters, in the preface to that publication, proceeded solely from a dread of ridicule, which formed a principal feature of Mr. Walpole's character, and which, carried, as in his case, to excess, must be called a principal weakness. "This
 " accounts for the ungracious language in which he
 " so often replies to the importunities of her anxious
 " affection; a language so foreign to his heart, and
 " so contrary to his own habits in friendship."¹

Is *this*, then, the man who is supposed to be "the
 " most eccentric, the most artificial, the most fastidious, the most capricious of mortals—his mind
 " a bundle of inconsistent whims and affectations
 " —his features covered with mask within mask,
 " which, when the outer disguise of obvious affectation was removed, you were still as far as ever
 " from seeing the real man."——"Affectation is
 " the essence of the man. It pervades all his
 " thoughts, and all his expressions. If it were
 " taken away, nothing would be left."²

He affected nothing; he played no part; he was what he appeared to be. Aware that he was ill qualified for politics, for public life, for parliamentary business, or indeed for business of any sort,

¹ See Preface to Madame du Deffand's Letters, p. xi; and vol. v. p. 152 of this Collection.

² See Edinburgh Review, vol. lviii. p. 233.

the whole tenour of his life was consistent with this opinion of himself. Had he attempted to effect what belongs only to characters of another stamp—had he endeavoured to take a lead in the House of Commons—had he sought for place, dignity, or office—had he aimed at intrigue, or attempted to be a tool for others—*then*, indeed, he might have deserved the appellation of artificial, eccentric, and capricious.

From the retreat of his father, which happened the year after he entered parliament, the only real interest he took in politics was when their events happened immediately to concern the objects of his private friendships. He occupied himself with what really *amused* him. If he had *affected* anything, it would certainly not have been a taste for the trifling occupations with which he is reproached. Of no person can it be less truly said, that “affectation was the essence of the man.” What man, or even what woman, ever *affected* to be the frivolous being he is described? When his critic says, that he had “the soul of a gentleman usher,” he was little aware that he only repeated what Lord Orford often said of himself—that from his knowledge of old ceremonials and etiquettes, he was sure that in a former state of existence, he must have been a *gentleman-usher about the time of Elizabeth*.

In politics, he was what he professed to be, a *Whig*, in the sense which that denomination bore in his younger days,—*never* a Republican.

In his old and enfeebled age, the horrors of the

first French revolution made him a Tory ; while he always lamented, as one of the worst effects of its excesses, that they must necessarily retard to a distant period the progress and establishment of civil liberty. But why are we to believe his contempt for crowned heads should have prevented his writing a memoir of “ Royal and Noble Authors ?” Their literary labours, when all brought together by himself, would not, it is believed, tend *much* to raise, or much to alter his opinion of them.

In his letters from Paris, written in the years 1765, 1766, 1767, and 1771, it will be seen, that so far from being infinitely more occupied with “ the fashions and gossip of Versailles and Marli than with a great moral revolution which was taking place in his sight,” he was truly aware of the state of the public mind, and foresaw all that was coming on.

Of Rousseau he has proved that he knew more, and that he judged him more accurately, than Mr. Hume, and many others who were then duped by his mad pride and disturbed understanding.

Voltaire had convicted himself of the basest of vain lies in the intercourse he sought with Mr. Walpole. The details of this transaction, and the letters which passed at the time, are already printed in the quarto edition of his works. In the short notes of his life left by himself, and from which all the dates in this notice are taken, it is thus mentioned :

“ Although Voltaire, with whom I had never
“ had the least acquaintance, had voluntarily writ-
“ ten to me first, and asked for my book, he

“ wrote a letter to the Duchesse de Choiseul, in
“ which, without saying a syllable of his having
“ written to me first, he told her I had officiously
“ sent him my works, and declared war with him
“ in defence ‘*de ce bouffon de Shakspeare,*’ whom in
“ his reply to me he pretended so much to admire.
“ The Duchesse sent me Voltaire’s letter; which
“ gave me such a contempt for his disingenuity,
“ that I dropped all correspondence with him.”

When he spoke with contempt of d’Alembert, it was not of his abilities; of which he never pretended to judge. Professor Saunderson had long before, when he was a lad at Cambridge, assured him, that it would be robbing him to pretend teaching him mathematics, of which his mind was perfectly incapable, so that any comparison “of the intellectual powers of the two men” would indeed be as “exquisitely ridiculous” as the critic declares it. But Lord Orford, speaking of d’Alembert, complains of the overweening importance which he, and all the men of letters of those days in France, attributed to their squabbles and disputes.

The idleness to which an absolute government necessarily condemns nine-tenths of its subjects, sufficiently accounts for the exaggerated importance given to and assumed by the French writers, even before they had become, in the language of the Reviewer, “the interpreters between England and mankind:” he asserts, “that all the great
“ discoveries in physics, in metaphysics, in political
“ science, are ours; but no foreign nation, except
“ France, has received them from us by direct com-

“munication: isolated in our situation, isolated by our manners, we found truth, but did not impart it.”¹ It may surely be asked, whether France will subscribe to this assertion of superiority, in the whole range of science? If she does, her character has undergone a greater change, than any she has yet experienced in the course of all her revolutions.

Lord Orford is believed by his critic to have “sneered” at everybody. Snecring was not his way of showing dislike. He had very strong prejudices, sometimes adopted on very insufficient grounds, and he therefore often made great mistakes in the appreciation of character; but when influenced by such impressions, he always expressed his opinions directly, and often too violently.

The affections of his heart were bestowed on few; for in early life they had never been cultivated, but they were singularly warm, pure, and constant; characterized not by the ardour of passion, but by the constant preoccupation of real affection. He had lost his mother, to whom he was fondly attached, early in life; and with his father, a man of coarse feelings and boisterous manners, he had few sentiments in common. Always feeble in constitution, he was unequal to the sports of the field, and to the drinking which then accompanied them; so that during his father’s retreat at Houghton, however much he respected his abilities and was devoted to his fame, he had little sympathy in his tastes, or pleasure in his society. To the friends

¹ Edinburgh Review, vol. lviii. p. 233.

of his own selection his devotion was not confined to professions or words : on all occasions of difficulty, of whatever nature, his active affection came forward in defence of their character, or assistance in their affairs.

When his friend Conway, as second in command under Sir John Mordaunt, in the expedition to St. Maloes, partook in some degree of the public censure called forth by the failure of these repeated ill-judged attempts on the coasts of France, Walpole's pen was immediately employed in rebutting the accusations of the popular pamphlet of the day on this subject, and establishing his friend's exemption from any responsibility in the failure. When, on a more important occasion, Mr. Conway was not only dismissed from being Equerry to the King, George III, but from the command of his regiment, for his constitutional conduct and votes in the House of Commons, in the memorable affair of the legality of General Warrants for the seizure of persons and papers, Walpole immediately stepped forward, not with cold commendations of his friend's upright and spirited conduct, but with all the confidence of long-tried affection, and all the security of noble minds incapable of misunderstanding each other, he insisted on being allowed to share in future his fortune with his friend, and thus more than repair the pecuniary loss he had incurred. Mr. Conway, in a letter to his brother Lord Hertford, of this period, says, " Horace Walpole has on this occasion shown that
" warmth of friendship that you know him capable

“ of so strongly, that I want words to express my “ sense of it ;”¹ thus proving the justice he did to Walpole’s sentiments and intentions.

In the case of General Conway’s near relationship and intimacy from childhood, the cause in which his fortunes were suffering might have warmed a colder heart, and opened a closer hand, than Mr. Walpole’s : but Madame du Deffand was a recent acquaintance, who had no claim on him, but the pleasure he received from her society, and his desire that her blind and helpless old age might not be deprived of any of the comforts and alleviations of which it was capable. When, by the financial arrangements of the French government, under the unscrupulous administration of the Abbé Terray, the creditors of the state were considerably reduced in income, Mr. Walpole, in the most earnest manner, begged to prevent the unpleasantness of his old friend’s exposing her necessities, and imploring aid from the minister of the day, by allowing him to make up the deficit in her revenue, as a loan, or in any manner that would be most satisfactory to her. The loss, after all, did not fall on that stock from which she derived her income, and the assistance was not accepted ; but Madame du Deffand’s confidence in, and opinion of, the offer, we see in her letters.

During his after life, although no ostentatious contributor to public charities and schemes of improvement, the friends in whose opinion he knew he could confide, had always more difficulty to repress than to excite his liberality.

¹ See vol. iv. p. 416.

That he should have wished his friend Conway to be employed as commander on military expeditions, which, as a soldier fond of his profession, he naturally coveted, although Mr. Walpole might disapprove of the policy of the minister in sending out such expeditions, surely implies neither disguise, nor contradiction in his opinions.

The dread which the reviewer supposes him to have had, lest he should lose caste as a gentleman, by ranking as a wit and an author, he was much too *fine a gentleman* to have believed in the possibility of feeling. He knew he had never studied since he left college; he knew that he was not at all a learned man: but the reputation that he had acquired by his wit and by his writings, not only among fine gentlemen but with society in general, made him nothing loath to cultivate every opportunity of increasing it. The account he gave of the idleness of his life to Sir Horace Mann, when he disclaims the title of “the learned gentleman,” was literally true; and it is not easy to imagine any reason why a man at the age of forty-three, who admits that he is idle, and who renounces being either a learned man or a politician, should be “ashamed” of playing loo in good company till two or three o’clock in the morning, if he neither ruins himself nor others.¹ He wrote his letters as rapidly as his disabled fingers would allow him to form the characters of a remarkably legible hand. No rough draughts or sketches of familiar letters were found amongst his papers at

¹ See Edinburgh Review, vol. lviii. page 232.

Strawberry Hill: but he was in the habit of putting down on the backs of letters or on slips of paper, a note of facts, of news, of witticisms, or of anything he wished not to forget, for the amusement of his correspondents.

After reading "The Mysterious Mother," who will accede to the opinion, that his works are "destitute of every charm that is derived from elevation, or from tenderness, of sentiment?"¹

But, with opinions as to the genius, the taste, or the talents of Lord Orford, this little notice has nothing to do. It aims solely at rescuing his individual character from misconceptions. Of the means necessary for this purpose, its writer, by the "painful pre-eminence" of age, remains the sole depositary, and being so, has submitted to the task of repelling such misconceptions. It is done with the reluctance which must always be experienced in differing from, or calling in question, the opinions of a person, for whom is felt all the admiration and respect due to super-eminent abilities, and all the grateful pride and affectionate regard inspired by personal friendship.

MB.

October 1840.

¹ See Edinburgh Review, vol. lviii. page 237.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD.

SIR,

1. BEFORE your last volume is published, I am desirous of stating to you some of the considerations which, more than seventeen years ago, led me to the belief I still entertain, that Walpole had a principal share in the composition and publication of the Letters of Junius: though I think it likely that Mason, or some other friend, corrected the style, and gave precision and force to the most striking passages.

2. It was in 1823, whilst I was residing in India, that Lord Holland's edition of Walpole's Memoires of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George the Second suggested to me this notion; and it was shortly afterwards communicated to several of my friends. The edition of Junius which I had with me, was that of Mr. Woodfall the younger, in three volumes; and I am not at present by any means satisfied that all the letters which the Editor assigns to Junius were written by him: but in this hasty notice I must proceed upon the supposition that they were.

3. It will be remembered that the Memoires were composed by Walpole in secrecy, and that he left them in a sealed box, which, by his will, was forbidden to be opened until many years after his death. The letters from which the corresponding passages are given below are all published as Letters of Junius by Mr. Woodfall, and are of dates later than the time when Walpole wrote his Memoires; but half a century earlier than the time when they were printed.

JUNIUS.

I own, my lord, that yours is not an uncommon character. Women, and men like women, are timid, vindictive, and irresolute.—*Woodfall's Junius*, vol. ii. p. 168.

Without openly supporting the person, you (Lord Mansfield) have

WALPOLE.

As it is observed that timorous natures like those of women are generally cruel, Lord Mansfield might easily slide into rigour, &c.—*Walpole's Memoires*, vol. ii. p. 175.

The occasions of the times had called him (Lord Mansfield) off from

JUNIUS.

done essential service to the cause ; and consoled yourself for the loss of a favourite family by reviving and establishing the maxims of their government.—Vol. ii. p. 162.

You (Lord Mansfield) would fain be thought to take no share in government, while in reality you are the main-spring of the machine.—Vol. ii. p. 179.

You secretly engross the power, while you decline the title of minister.—Vol. ii. p. 179.

In council he generally affects to take a moderate part.—Vol. ii. p. 354.

At present there is something oracular in the delivery of my opinion. I speak from a recess which no human curiosity can penetrate.—Vol. i. p. 314.

Our enemies treat us as the cunning trader does the unskilful Indian. They magnify their generosity when they give us *baubles* of little proportionate value for ivory and gold.—Vol. ii. p. 359.

If you *deny him the cup*, there will be no keeping him *within the pale of the ministry*.—Vol. ii. p. 249.

Honour and justice must not be renounced, although a thousand *modes* of right and wrong were to occupy the degrees of morality between Zeno and Epicurus. The *fundamental principles of Christianity* may still be preserved.—Vol. ii. p. 346.

He (the Duke of Bedford) would not have betrayed such ignorance or such contempt of the constitution as openly to avow in a *court of judicature* the purchase and sale of a borough.

Note.—In an answer in Chancery in a suit against him to recover a large sum paid him by a person whom he had undertaken to return to parliament for one of his Grace's boroughs. He was compelled to repay *the money*.—Vol. i. p. 576.

WALPOLE.

principles that favoured an arbitrary king—he still leaned towards an arbitrary government.—Vol. ii. p. 266.

Pitt liked the dignity of despotism ; Lord Mansfield the reality.—Vol. ii. p. 274.

He was timid himself, and always waving what he was always courting.—Vol. ii. p. 336.

The conduct was artful, new, and grand : secluded from all eyes, his (Lord Chatham's) orders were received as oracles.—Vol. ii. p. 347.

They made a legal purchase to all eternity of empires and posterity, from a parcel of naked savages, for a handful of glass beads and *baubles*.—Vol. i. p. 343.

Where I believe the clergy do not *deny the laity the cup*.—*Letter to Montague*.

He took care to regulate his patron's warnith *within the pale* of his own advantage.—*Memoires*, Vol. ii. p. 197.

Come over to *the pale of loyalty*.—Vol. i. p. 282.

The modes of Christianity were exhausted.—Vol. ii. p. 282.

To mark how much the *modes* of thinking change, and that *fundamentals* themselves can make no impression.—Vol. ii. p. 285.

Corruption prevailed in the House of Commons. Instances had been brought to our *courts of judicature* how much it prevailed in our elections.

Note.—The Duke of Bedford had received 1500*l.* for electing Jeffery French at one of his boroughs in the West ; but he dying immediately, his heir sued the Duke for *the money*, who paid it rather than let the cause be heard.

JUNIUS.

The Princess Dowager made it her first care to inspire her son with horror against heresy, and with a respect for the church.

His mother took more pains to form his belief than either his morals or his understanding.—Vol. iii. p. 408.

That prince had strong natural parts, and used frequently to blush for his own ignorance and want of education, which had been wilfully neglected by his mother and her minion.

* * * * *

Our great Edward, too, at an early period, had sense enough to understand the nature of the connection between his abandoned mother and the detested Mortimer.

* * * * *

When it was proposed to settle the present King's household as Prince of Wales, it is well known that the Earl of Bute was forced into it in direct contradiction to the late King's inclination.—Vol. ii.

WALPOLE.

From the death of the Prince the object of the Princess Dowager had been the government of her son ; and her attention had answered. She had taught him great devotion, and she had taken care that he should be taught nothing else.—Vol. i. p. 396.

Martin spoke for the clause, and said, " The King could not have a separate interest from his people, the Princess might ; witness Queen Isabella and her minion Mortimer." —Vol. i. p. 118.

Fox had an audience. The monarch was sour, but endeavoured to keep his temper, yet made no concessions ; no request to the retiring minister to stay. At last he let slip the true cause of his indignation: " You," said he, " have made me make that puppy Bute groom of the stole."—Vol. ii. p. 92.

Though too long to be cited in these hurried notes, there are several other passages in which the coincidence of sentiment and expression, and of the order in which the thoughts and arguments are ranged, is very remarkable: and the difficulty of accounting otherwise for such coincidences between the Letters of Junius and the unpublished and secret Memoires of Walpole, first made me suspect that the two names might belong to one and the same person—Horace Walpole *the younger*.

4. Being led by this conjecture to examine the other works of Walpole, I found, in them also, many echoes, as it were, of the voice of Junius, which it is singular should not have been more observed. No one, I think, can collate the concluding portion of Walpole's letter to Lord Bute, of February 15, 1762, and the latter part of the eulogium of Junius on Lord Chatham, without being struck by the similarity of manner and tone ; and by the identity of that feeling which, in both cases, prompts the writer, whilst he is elaborating compliments, to defend himself jealously against all suspicion of flattery or interested motives.

JUNIUS.

I did not intend to make a public declaration of the respect I bear Lord Chatham. I well knew what unworthy conclusions would be drawn from it. But I am called upon to deliver my opinion, and surely it is not in the little censure of Mr. Horne to deter me from doing signal justice to a man who, I confess, has grown upon my esteem. As for the common, sordid views of avarice, or any purpose of vulgar ambition, I question whether the applause of Junius would be of service to Lord Chatham. My vote will hardly recommend him to an increase of his pension, or to a seat in the Cabinet. But if his ambition be upon a level with his understanding; if he judges of what is truly honourable for himself with the same superior genius which animates and directs him to eloquence in debate, to wisdom in decision, even the pen of Junius shall contribute to reward him. Recorded honour shall gather round his monument, and thicken over him. It is a solid fabric, and will support the laurels that adorn it. I am not conversant in the language of panegyric. These praises are extorted from me; but they will wear well, for they have been dearly earned.—Vol. ii. p. 310.

WALPOLE.

I did not purpose to tempt again the patience of mankind. But the case is very different with regard to my trouble. My whole fortune is from the bounty of the Crown and from the public: it would ill become me to spare any pains for the King's glory, or for the honour and satisfaction of my country; and give me leave to add, my lord, it would be an ungrateful return for the distinction with which your lordship has condescended to honour me, if I withheld such trifling aid as mine, when it might in the least tend to adorn your lordship's administration. From me, my lord, permit me to say these are not words of course, or of compliment, this is not the language of flattery: your lordship knows I have no views; perhaps knows that, insignificant as it is, my praise is never detached from my esteem: and when you have raised, as I trust you will, real monuments of glory, the most contemptible characters in the inscription dedicated by your country, may not be the testimony of, my lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant.—*Letters*, vol. iv. p. 208.

I have neither time nor space for going much farther into this part of the subject; but there is one circumstance which, in its application to the supposition that Francis was Junius, is too remarkable to be passed over. Sir Philip Francis supplied Mr. Almon with reports of two speeches of Lord Chatham, in one of which there is this passage, "*The Americans had purchased their liberty at a dear rate, since they had quitted their native country and gone in search of freedom to a desert.*" Junius, about three weeks before, had said, "*They left their native land in search of freedom, and found it in a desert;*" and it has been inferred from this, that the words in the speech were not Lord Chatham's, but the reporter's, and that Sir Philip Francis was Junius. But it happens that Walpole, in his Royal

and Noble Authors, some years earlier than either the letter of Junius or the speech of Lord Chatham, had said of Lord Brooke, that he was on the point "*of seeking liberty in the forests of America.*"

5. If we turn from a recollection of the words to a consideration of the peculiarities of the style of Junius, I think it will be agreed that the most remarkable of all is that species of irony which consists in equivocal compliment. Walpole also excelled in this; and prided himself upon doing so. Are we not justified in saying, that of all who, in the eighteenth century, cast their thoughts on public occurrences into the form of letters, Junius and Walpole are the most distinguished? that the works of no other prose writer of their time exhibit a zest for political satire equal to that which is displayed in the Letters of Junius, and in the Memoires and Political Letters of Walpole? and that the sarcasm of equivocal praise was the favourite weapon in the armoury of each, though it certainly appears to have been tempered, and sharpened, and polished with additional care for the hand of Junius? When did Francis ever deal in compliment or in equivocation? In his vituperation there was always more of fury than of malice: but Junius and Walpole were cruel. Madame du Deffand says to the latter, "*Votre plume est de fer trempé dans le fiel.*" I have sometimes thought that clever old woman either knew or suspected him to be Junius. She uses in one place the unusual expression, "*Votre écrit de Junius.*" and if Walpole was Junius, some of the most carefully composed letters in 1769 and 1771 were written in Paris; where, indeed, it would seem that Junius, whoever he was, collected the materials for the accusation with which he threatened the Duke of Bedford, and which he evidently knew to be untrue.

6. It has sometimes been said, that the Letters of Junius must have been written by a lawyer, and they were at one time attributed even to Mr. Dunning. The mistakes which I am about to notice, trifling as they may be, make it impossible that any lawyer should have been the author; and it appears to me that not only is there a considerable resemblance in those mistakes which I adduce of Walpole's, but that the affectation in

both of employing legal terms with which they were not familiar, and of which they did not distinctly apprehend the meaning, is very remarkable. Junius thought De Lolme's Essay "deep,"¹ and talks of property which "savours of the *reality*."² he misapplies that trite expression of the courts, *bonâ fide*;³ misunderstands *mortmain*,⁴ and supposes that an *inquisitio post mortem* was an inquiry how the deceased came by his death.⁵ Walpole talks of "the purparty of a wife's lands;" of "tenures against which, of all others, quo warrantos are sure to take place;" of "the days of soccage," which he supposes to be obsolete; and of a *fera naturæ*.

JUNIUS.

You say the facts on which you reason are universally admitted: a *gratis dictum* which I flatly deny.—Vol. iii. p. 143.

They are the trustees, not the owners of the estate. The fee simple is in us.—Vol. i. p. 345.

WALPOLE.

This circumstance is alleged against them as an incident contrived to gain belief, as if they had been in danger of their lives. The argument is *gratis dictum*.—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 568.

Do you think we shall purchase the fee simple of him for so many years?—*Letters*, vol. iii. p. 77.

7. Walpole's time of life, his station in society, means of information, and habits of writing much, and anonymously, and in concealment, all tally with the supposition of his being Junius. So do his places of residence, when that part of the subject is carefully examined.

8. It is an odd circumstance that Walpole, who makes remarks on everything, makes no remark on Junius. If he ever expressed an opinion of him in his letters to any of his numerous correspondents, those letters have been suppressed. There are fewer letters of his in the years during which Junius was writing than in any others.

9. Walpole's quarrel with the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, and the party whom he calls "the Bedford court," and Junius "the Bloomsbury gang," would account for the rancour of the letters of the latter to the Duke.

10. Walpole's dislike and opinion of the Duke of Grafton,

¹ Woodfall's Junius, vol. i. p. 385.

³ Ibid. p. 311.

⁴ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 131.

² Ibid. p. 312.

⁵ Ibid. vol. i. p. 454.

which is nowhere more remarkably expressed than in a letter published for the first time in your fifth volume, page 205, coupled with his friendship for the first Duchess of Grafton, fall in with the attacks of Junius on the Duke.

11. The *Memoires* of Walpole show an enmity to Lord Mansfield almost equal to that of Junius.

12. Turning from these to a person in a different station, we find, on the part of Walpole, (and, by-the-by, of Mason too,) a sort of spite against Dr. Johnson; and in the works of Walpole, selected by himself for publication after his death,¹ there is a high-wrought criticism and condemnation of the style of Johnson, which I cannot help believing to have been concocted in revenge of the well-known handling of Junius in Johnson's pamphlet on the Falkland Islands. "Let not injudicious admiration mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow," is said by Johnson of Junius: and Walpole says of Johnson, that "he destroys more enemies by the weight of his shield, than with the point of his spear."

13. There is a host of small facts which might be adduced in support of what I have advanced. Any one who has leisure to examine the voluminous works of Walpole, and who can lend his mind to the inquiry, will find them crowd upon him. Let me mention one well-known occurrence.

Junius says, in the postscript of a private note to Mr. Woodfall, "Beware of David Garrick. He was sent to pump you, and went directly to Richmond to tell the King I should write no more." He then directed Woodfall to send the following note to Garrick, but not in the handwriting of Junius:—"I am very exactly informed of your impertinent inquiries, and of the information you so busily sent to Richmond, and with what triumph and exultation it was received. I knew every particular of it the next day. Now, mark me, vagabond! Keep to your pantomimes, or be assured you shall hear of it. Meddle no more, thou busy informer! It is in my power to make you curse the hour in which you dared to interfere with Junius."²

Mr. Woodfall remarks on this, that Garrick had received a

¹ Walpole's Works, vol. iv. p. 361.

² Junius, vol. i. p. 228.

letter from Woodfall, (the editor of the newspaper in which the letters of Junius first appeared,) before the above note of Junius was sent to the printer, in which Garrick was told, in confidence, that there were some doubts whether Junius would continue to write much longer. Garrick flew with the intelligence to Mr. Remus, one of the pages to the King, who immediately conveyed it to his Majesty *at that time residing at Richmond*; and from the peculiar sources of information that were open to this extraordinary writer, Junius was apprized of the whole transaction on the ensuing morning, and wrote the above postscript, and the letter that follows it, in consequence.

Now all that appears to Mr. Woodfall the younger, to be so wonderful in these circumstances is very easily explained, if we suppose Walpole to have been Junius. Strawberry Hill is very near Richmond Park, and Walpole had many acquaintances amongst those who were about the King; whilst his friend Mrs. Clive, the actress, who lived in the adjoining house to his own, and her brother, Mr. Raftor, who frequently visited her, both belonged to Garrick's company.

But I have extended this letter too far. My purpose was merely to invite your attention to a subject of some literary interest, which you have peculiar opportunities of examining; and to enable you, if you should think fit, to draw to it the attention of the public also.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

CHAS. EDW. GREY.

20, Albemarle Street,
October 24, 1840.

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PORTRAITS IN THE SIXTH VOLUME.

The Honourable Horace Walpole ; from a painting by Eckardt,
at Strawberry Hill to front Title.

Miss Mary Berry ; from a bust by the Honourable Anne Sey-
mour Damer, in the possession of Sir Alexander John-
son to front p. 1

The Right Honourable Elizabeth Berkeley, Lady Craven, after-
wards Margravine of Anspach ; from the original by Romney,
in the collection at Strawberry Hill p. 274

Full many an Artist has on canvas fix'd
All charms that Nature's pencil ever mix'd,
The witching of her eyes, the grace that tips
The inexpressible douceur of her lips :
Romney alone in this fair image caught,
Each charm's expression, and each feature's thought ;
And shows how in their sweet assembly sit,
Taste, spirit, softness, sentiment, and wit.

H. W.

The Honourable Anne Seymour Damer, only child of General
Conway and the Countess of Ailesbury ; from a drawing by
R. Cosway, R.A. in the collection at Strawberry Hill p. 426



PLATE I. THE BUST OF THE VIRGIN MARY

CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 8, 1778.

I HAVE had some conversation with a ministerial person, on the subject of pacification with France; and he dropped a hint, that as we should not have much chance of a good peace, the Opposition would make great clamour on it. I said a few words on the duty of ministers to do what they thought right, be the consequence what it would. But as honest men do not want such lectures, and dishonest will not let them weigh, I waived that theme, to dwell on what is more likely to be persuasive, and which I am firmly persuaded is no less true than the former maxim; and that was, that the ministers are *still* so strong, that if they could get a peace that would save the nation, though not a brilliant or glorious one, the nation in general would be pleased with it, and the clamours of the Opposition be insignificant.

I added, what I think true, too, that no time is to be lost in treating; not only for preventing a blow, but from the consequences the first misfortune would have. The nation is not yet alienated from the court, but it is growing so; is grown so

enough, for any calamity to have violent effects. Any internal disturbance would advance the hostile designs of France. An insurrection from distress would be a double invitation to invasion; and, I am sure, much more to be dreaded, even personally, by the ministers, than the ill-humours of Opposition for even an inglorious peace. To do the Opposition justice, it is not composed of incendiaries. Parliamentary speeches raise no tumults: but tumults would be a dreadful thorough bass to speeches. The ministers do not know the strength they have left (supposing they apply it in time), if they are afraid of making any peace. They were too sanguine in making war; I hope they will not be too timid of making peace.

What do you think of an idea of mine, of offering France a neutrality? that is, to allow her to assist both us and the Americans. I know she would assist only them: but were it not better to connive at her assisting them, without attacking us, than her doing both? A treaty with her would perhaps be followed by one with America. We are sacrificing all the essentials we *can* recover, for a few words; and risking the independence of this country, for the nominal supremacy over America. France seems to leave us time for treating. She made no scruple of begging peace of us in '63, that she might lie by and recover her advantages. Was not that a wise precedent? Does not she *now* show that it was? Is not policy the honour of nations? I mean, not morally, but has Europe left itself any other honour? And since it has really left itself no honour, and as little morality, does not the morality of a nation consist in its preserving itself in as much happiness as it can? The invasion of Portugal by Spain in the last war, and the partition of Poland, have abrogated the law of nations. Kings have left no ties between one another. Their duty to their people is still allowed. He is a good King that preserves his people; and if temporising answers that end, is it not justifiable? You, who are as moral as wise, answer my questions. Grotius is obsolete. Dr. Joseph¹ and Dr. Frede-

¹ The Emperor of Germany.

ric,¹ with four hundred thousand commentators, are reading new lectures — and I should say, thank God, to one another, if the four hundred thousand commentators were not in worse danger than they.² Louis XVI. is grown a casuist compared to those partitioners. Well, let us simple individuals keep our honesty, and bless our stars that we have not armies at our command, lest we should divide kingdoms that are at our *bienséance*! What a dreadful thing it is for such a wicked little imp as man to have absolute power!—But I have travelled into Germany, when I meant to talk to you only of England; and it is too late to recall my text. Good night!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

July 12, 1778.

MR. LORT has delivered your papers to me, dear Sir, and I have already gone through them. I will try if I can make anything of them, but fear I have not art enough, as I perceive there is absolutely but one fact—the expulsion. You have certainly very clearly proved that Mr. Baker was neither supported by Mr. Prior nor Bishop Burnet; but these are mere negatives. So is the question, whether he intended to compile an *Athenæ Cantabrigienses* or not; and on that you say but little, as you have not seen his papers in the Museum. I will examine the printed catalogue, and try if I can discover the truth thence, when I go to town. I will also borrow the new *Biographia*, as I wish to know more of the expulsion. As it is our only fact, one would not be too dry on it. Upon the whole, I think that it would be preferable to draw up an ample character of Mr. Baker, rather than a life. The one was most beautiful, amiable, conscientious; the other totally

¹ Frederic II. King of Prussia.

² The Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia having some dispute about Bavaria, brought immense armies into the field, but found their forces so nearly balanced, that neither ventured to attack the other; and the Prussian monarch falling back upon Silesia, the affair was, through the intervention of the Empress of Russia, settled by negotiation, which ended in the peace of Teschen.—E.

barren of more than one event: and though you have taken excellent pains to discover all that was possible, yet there is an obscurity hangs over the circumstances that even did attend him; as his connexion with Bishop Crewe and his living. His own modesty comes out the brighter, but then it composes a character, not a life.

As to Mr. Kippis and his censures, I am perfectly indifferent to them. He betrays a pert malignity in hinting an intention of being severe on my father, for the pleasure of exerting a right I allowed, and do allow, to be a just one, though it is not just to do it for that reason; however, let him say his pleasure. The truth will not hurt my father; falsehood will recoil on the author.

His asserting, that my censure of Mr. Addison's character of Lord Somers is not to be justified, is a silly *ipse dixit*, as he does not, in truth cannot, show why it is not to be justified. The passage I alluded to is the argument of an old woman; and Mr. Addison's being a writer of true humour is not a justification of his reasoning like a superstitious gossip. In the other passage you have sent me, Mr. Kippis is perfectly in the right, and corrects me very justly. Had I ever seen Archbishop Abbot's¹ Preface, with the outrageous flattery on, and lies of James I, I should certainly never have said, "Honest Abbot could not flatter." I should have said, and do say, I never saw grosser perversion of truth. One can almost excuse the faults of James when his bishops were such base sycophants. What can a king think of human nature, when it produces such wretches? I am too impartial to prefer Puritans to clergymen, or *vice versâ*, when Whitgift and Abbot only ran a race of servility and adulation: the result is, that priests of all religions are the same. James and his Levites were worthy of each other; the golden calf and the idolaters were well coupled, and it is pity they ever came out of the

¹ Dr. George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, born at Guildford, in Surrey, in 1562. In 1604, when the translation of the Scriptures now in use was commenced by direction of King James, Dr. Abbot was the second of eight divines of Oxford to whom was committed the care of translating the New Testament, with the exception of the Epistles. He died at the palace at Croydon, in 1633.—E.

wilderness. I am very glad Mr. Tyson has escaped death and disappointment: pray wish him joy of both from me. Has not this Indian summer dispersed your complaints? We are told we are to be invaded. Our Abbots and Whitgifts now see with what successes and consequences their preaching up a crusade against America has been crowned! Archbishop Markham¹ may have an opportunity of exercising his martial prowess. I doubt he would resemble Bishop Crewe more than good Mr. Baker. Let us respect those only who are Israelites indeed. I surrender Dr. Abbot to you. Church and presbytery are terms for monopolies. Exalted notions of church matters are contradictions in terms to the lowliness and humility of the gospel. There is nothing sublime but the Divinity. Nothing is sacred but as His work. A tree or a brute stone is more respectable as such, than a mortal called an Archbishop, or an edifice called a Church, which are the puny and perishable productions of men. Calvin and Wesley had just the same views as the Pope; power and wealth their objects. I abhor both, and admire Mr. Baker.

P. S. I like Popery as well as you, and have shown I do. I like it as I like chivalry and romance. They all furnish one with ideas and visions, which Presbyterianism does not. A Gothic church or a convent fills one with romantic dreams—but for the mysterious, the Church in the abstract, it is a jargon that means nothing, or a great deal too much, and I reject it and its apostles, from Athanasius to Bishop Keene.²

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Saturday, July 18, 1778.

YESTERDAY evening the following notices were fixed up in Lloyd's coffee-house:—That a merchant in the city had received an express from France, that the Brest fleet, consist-

¹ Dr. William Markham, translated to the see of York from Chester in 1776. He died in 1807.—E.

² Dr. Edmund Keene, Bishop of Ely.—E.

ing of twenty-eight ships of the line, were sailed, with orders to burn, sink, and destroy. That Admiral Keppel was at Plymouth, and had sent to demand three more ships of the line to enable him to meet the French. On these notices stocks sunk three-and-a-half per cent. An account I have received this morning from a good hand says, that on Thursday the Admiralty received a letter from Admiral Keppel, who was off the Land's End, saying that the Worcester was in sight; that the Peggy had joined him, and had seen the Thunderer making sail for the fleet; that he was waiting for the Centaur, Terrible, and Vigilant; and that having received advice from Lord Shulldham that the Shrewsbury was to sail from Plymouth on Thursday, he should likewise wait for her. His fleet will then consist of thirty ships of the line; and he hoped to have an opportunity of trying his strength with the French fleet on our own coast: if not, he would seek them on theirs. The French fleet sailed on the 7th, consisting of thirty-one ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates. This state is probably more authentic than those at Lloyd's.

Thus you see how big the moment is! and, unless far more favourable to us in its burst than good sense allows one to promise, it must leave us greatly exposed. Can we expect to beat without considerable loss?—and then, where have we another fleet? I need not state the danger from a reverse. The Spanish ambassador certainly arrived on Monday.

I shall go to town on Monday for a day or two; therefore, if you write to-morrow, direct to Arlington-street. I add no more: for words are unworthy of the situation; and to blame now, would be childish. It is hard to be gamed for against one's consent; but when one's country is at stake, one must throw oneself out of the question. When one is old and nobody, one must be whirled with the current, and shake one's wings like a fly, if one lights on a pebble. The prospect is so dark, that one shall rejoice at whatever does not happen that may. Thus I have composed a sort of philosophy for myself, that reserves every possible chance. You want none of these artificial aids to your resolution. Invincible

courage and immaculate integrity are not dependent on the folly of ministers or on the events of war. Adieu!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 24, 1778.

UPON reviewing your papers, dear Sir, I think I can make more of them than I at first conceived. I have even commenced the life, and do not dislike my ideas for it, if the execution does but answer. At present I am interrupted by another task, which you, too, have wished me to undertake. In a word, somebody has published Chatterton's works, and charged me heavily for having discountenanced him. He even calls for the indignation of the public against me. It is somewhat singular, that I am to be offered up as a victim at the altar of a notorious impostor! but as many saints have been impostors, so many innocent persons have been sacrificed to them. However, I shall not be patient under this attack, but shall publish an answer—the narrative I mentioned to you. I would, as you know, have avoided entering into this affair if I could; but as I do not despise public esteem, it is necessary to show how groundless the accusation is. Do not speak of my intention, as perhaps I shall not execute it immediately.

I am not in the least acquainted with the Mr. Bridges you mention, nor know that I ever saw him. The tomb for Mr. Gray is actually erected, and at the generous expense of Mr. Mason, and with an epitaph of four lines,¹ as you heard, and written by him—but the scaffolds are not yet removed. I was in town yesterday, and intended to visit it, but there is digging a vault for the family of Northumberland, which obstructs the removal of the boards.

I rejoice in your amendment, and reckon it among my

¹ “ No more the Grecian Muse unrivall'd reigns ;
To Britain let the nations homage pay :
She felt a Homer's fire in Milton's strains,
A Pindar's rapture in the lyre of Gray.”—E.

obligations to the fine weather, and hope it will be the most lasting of them. Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, August 15, 1778.

YOUR observation of Rowley not being mentioned by William of Wyrcestre, is very strong, indeed, dear Sir, and I shall certainly take notice of it. It has suggested to me that he is not named by Bale or Pitts¹ — is he? Will you trouble yourself to look? I conclude he is not, or we should have heard of it. Rowley is the reverse of King Arthur, and all those heroes that have been expected a second time; he is to come again for the first time — I mean, as a great poet. My defence amounts to thirty pages of the size of this paper: yet I believe I shall not publish it. I abhor a controversy; and what is it to me whether people believe in an impostor or not? Nay, shall I convince everybody of my innocence, though there is not the shadow of reason for thinking I was to blame? If I met a beggar in the street, and refused him sixpence, thinking him strong enough to work, and two years afterwards he should die of drinking, might not I be told I had deprived the world of a capital rope-dancer? In short, to show one's self sensible to such accusations, would only invite more; and since they accuse me of contempt, I will have it for my accusers.

My brass plate for Bishop Walpole was copied exactly from the print in Dart's Westminster, of the tomb of Robert Dalby, Bishop of Durham, with the sole alteration of the name. I shall return, as soon as I have time, to Mr. Baker's Life; but I shall want to consult you, or, at least, the account of him in the new Biographia, as your notes want some dates. I am not satisfied yet with what I have sketched;

¹ John Bale, Bishop of Ossory. The work to which Walpole alludes is his "*Catalogus Scriptorum illustrium Majoris Brytannie.*" Basle, 1557-9. — John Pitts wrote, in opposition to Bale, "*De illustribus Angliæ Scriptoribus.*" Paris, 1619.—E.

but I shall correct it. My small talent was grown very dull. This attack about Chatterton has a little revived it; but it warns me to have done; for, if one comes to want provocatives, the produce will soon be feeble. Adieu! Yours most sincerely.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 21, 1778.

I THINK it so very uncertain whether this letter will find you, that I write it merely to tell you I received yours to-day. I recollect nothing particularly worth seeing in Sussex that you have not seen (for I think you have seen Coudray and Stansted, and I know you have Petworth), but Hurst Monceaux, near Battle; and I don't know whether it is not pulled down. The site of Arundel Castle is fine, and there are some good tombs of the Fitzalans at the church, but little remains of the castle; in the room of which is a modern brick house; and in the late Duke's time the ghost of a giant walked there, his grace said — but I suppose the present Duke has laid it in the Red Sea — of claret.

Besides Knowle and Penshurst, I should think there were several seats of old families in Kent worth seeing; but I do not know them. I poked out Summer-hill¹ for the sake of the *Babylonienne* in Grammont; but it is now a mere farmhouse. Don't let them persuade you to visit Leeds Castle, which is not worth seeing.

You have been near losing me and half a dozen fair cousins to-day. The Goldsmiths' Company dined in Mr. Shirley's field, next to Pope's. I went to Ham with my three Waldegrave nieces and Miss Keppel, and saw them land, and dine in tents erected for them, from the opposite shore. You may imagine how beautiful the sight was in such a spot and in such a day! I stayed and dined at Ham, and after

¹ Formerly a country-seat of Queen Elizabeth, and the residence of Charles the Second when the court was at Tunbridge.—E.

dinner Lady Dysart with Lady Bridget Tollemache took our four nieces on the water to see the return of the barges, but were to set me down at Lady Browne's. We were, with a footman and the two watermen, ten in a little boat. As we were in the middle of the river, a larger boat full of people drove directly upon us on purpose. I believe they were drunk. We called to them, to no purpose; they beat directly against the middle of our little skiff—but, thank you, did not do us the least harm—no thanks to them. Lady Malpas was in Lord Strafford's garden, and gave us for gone. In short, Neptune never would have had so beautiful a prize as the four girls.

I hear an express has been sent to * * * * to offer him the mastership of the horse. I had a mind to make you guess, but you never can—to Lord Exeter! Pray let me know the moment you return to Park-place.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, August 22, 1778.

I BEG you will feel no uneasiness, dear Sir, at having shown my name to Dr. Glynn. I can never suspect you, who are giving me fresh proofs of your friendship, and solicitude for my reputation, of doing anything unkind. It is true I do not think I shall publish anything about Chatterton. Is not it an affront to Innocence, not to be perfectly satisfied in her? My pamphlet, for such it would be, is four times as large as the narrative in your hands, and I think would not discredit me—but, in truth, I am grown much fonder of truth than fame; and scribblers or their patrons shall not provoke me to sacrifice the one to the other. Lord Hardwicke, I know, has long been my enemy,—latterly, to get a sight of the Conway Papers, he has paid great court to me, which, to show how little I regarded his enmity, I let him see, at least the most curious. But as I set as little value on his friendship, I did not grant another of his requests. Indeed, I have made more than one

foe by not indulging the vanity of those who have made application to me; and I am obliged to them, when they augment my contempt by quarrelling with me for that refusal. It was the case of Mr. Masters, and is now of Lord Hardwicke. He solicited me to reprint his Bæotian volume of Sir Dudley Carleton's Papers, for which he had two motives. The first he inherited from his father, the desire of saving money; for though his fortune is so much larger than mine, he knew I would not let out my press for hire, but should treat him with the expense, as I have done for those I have obliged. The second was, that the rarity of my editions makes them valuable, and though I cannot make men read dull books, I can make them purchase them. His lordship, therefore, has bad grace in affecting to overlook one, whom he had in vain courted, yet he again is grown my enemy, because I would not be my own. For my writings, they do not depend on him or the venal authors he patronizes (I doubt very frugally), but on their own merits or demerits. It is from men of sense they must expect their sentence, not from boobies and hireling authors, whom I have always shunned, with the whole fry of minor wits, critics, and monthly censors. I have not seen the Review you mention, nor ever do, but when something particular is pointed out to me. Literary squabbles I know preserve one's name, when one's work will not; but I despise the fame that depends on scolding till one is remembered, and remembered by whom? The scavengers of literature! Reviewers are like sextons, who in a charnel-house can tell you to what John Thompson or to what Tom Matthews such a skull or such belonged—but who wishes to know? The fame that is only to be found in such vaults, is like the fires that burn unknown in tombs, and go out as fast as they are discovered. Lord Hardwicke is welcome to live among the dead if he likes it, and can contrive to live nowhere else.

Chatterton did abuse me under the title of Baron of Otranto,¹ but unluckily the picture is more like Dr. Milles

¹ Chatterton exhibited a ridiculous portrait of Walpole, in the “Me-

and Chatterton's own devotees, than to me, who am but a recreant antiquary, and, as the poor lad found by experience, did not swallow every fragment that was offered to me as an antique; though that is a feature he has bestowed upon me.

I have seen, too, the criticism you mention on the *Castle of Otranto*, in the preface to the *Old English Baron*.¹ It is not at all oblique, but, though mixed with high compliments, directly attacks the visionary part, which, says the author or authoress, makes one laugh. I do assure you, I have not had the smallest inclination to return that attack. It would even be ungrateful, for the work is a professed imitation of mine, only stripped of the marvellous; and so entirely stripped, except in one awkward attempt at a ghost or two, that it is the most insipid dull nothing you ever saw. It certainly does not make one laugh; for what makes one doze, seldom makes one merry.

I am very sorry to have talked for near three pages on what relates to myself, who should be of no consequence, if people did not make me so, whether I will or not. My not replying to them, I hope, is a proof I do not seek to make myself the topic of conversation. How very foolish are the squabbles of authors! They buzz and are troublesome to-day, and then repose for ever on some shelf in a college library, close by their antagonists, like Henry VI. and Edward IV. at Windsor.

I shall be in town in a few days, and will send you the heads of painters, which I left there; and along with them for yourself a translation of a French play,² that I have just printed there. It is not for your reading, but as one of the Strawberry editions, and one of the rarest; for I have printed

moirs of a Sad Dog," under the character of "the redoubted Baron Otranto, who has spent his whole life in conjectures."—E.

¹ The *Old English Baron*, a romance of considerable repute, which has been frequently reprinted, was the production of Clara Reeve. This ingenious lady had published, in 1772, a translation of Barclay's Latin romance of *Argenis*, under the title of "The Phoenix, or the History of Polyarchus and Argenia." She was born at Ipswich in 1738, and died there in 1808.—E.

² "The Sleep-Walker;" Strawberry Hill, 1778. It was translated from the French of M. Pont de Veyle, by Lady Craven, afterwards Margravine of Anspach.—E.

but seventy-five copies. It was to oblige Lady Craven, the translatress; and will be an aggravation of my offence to Sir Dudley's State Papers.

I hope this Elysian summer, for it has been above Indian, has dispersed all your complaints. Yet it does not agree with fruit; the peaches and nectarines are shrivelled to the size of damsons, and half of them drop. Yet you remember what portly bellies the peaches had at Paris, where it is generally as hot. I suppose our fruit-trees are so accustomed to rain, that they don't know how to behave without it. Adieu!

P. S. I can divert you with a new adventure, that has happened to me in the literary way. About a month ago, I received a letter from a Mr. Jonathan Scott, at Shrewsbury, to tell me he was possessed of a MS. of Lord Herbert's Account of the Court of France,¹ which he designed to publish by subscription, and which he desired me to subscribe to, and to assist in the publication. I replied, that having been obliged to the late Lord Powis and his widow, I could not meddle with any such thing, without knowing that it had the consent of the present Earl and his mother.

Another letter, commending my reserve, told me Mr. Scott had applied for it formerly, and would again now. This showed me they did not consent. I have just received a third letter, owning the approbation is not yet arrived; but to keep me employed in the mean time, the modest Mr. Scott, whom I never saw, nor know more of than I did of Chatterton, proposes to me to get his fourth son a place in the civil department in India: the father not choosing it should be in the military, his three elder sons being engaged in that branch already. If this fourth son breaks his neck, I suppose it will be laid to my charge!

Yours ever.

¹ By Lord Herbert's Account of the Court of France, Mr. Scott most probably referred to his "Letters written during his residence at the French Court," and which were first published from the originals, in the edition of his Life which appeared in 1826.—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

September 1, 1778.

I HAVE now seen the Critical Review, with Lord Hardwicke's note, in which I perceive the sensibility of your friendship for me, dear Sir, but no rudeness on his part. Contemptuous it was to reprint Jane Shore's letter without any notice of my having given it before: the apology, too, is not made to me — but I am not affected by such incivilities, that imply more ill-will than boldness. As I expected more from your representation, I believe I expressed myself with more warmth than the occasion deserved; and, as I love to be just, I will, now I am perfectly cool, be so to Lord Hardwicke. His dislike of me was meritorious in him, as I conclude it was founded on my animosity to *his* father, as mine had been, from attachment to *my own*, who was basely betrayed by the late Earl. The present has given me formerly many peevish marks of enmity; and I suspect, I don't know if justly, that he was the mover of the cabal in the Antiquarian Society against me — but all their misunderstandings were of a size that made me smile rather than provoke me. The Earl, as I told you, has since been rather wearisome in applications to me; which I received very civilly, but encouraged no farther. When he wanted me to be his printer, I own I was not good Christian enough, not to be pleased with refusing, and yet in as well-bred excuses as I could form, pleading, what was true at the time, as you know, that I had laid down my press — but so much for this idle story. I shall think no more of it, but adhere to my specific system. The antiquarians will be as ridiculous as they used to be; and, since it is impossible to infuse taste into them, they will be as dry and dull as their predecessors. One may revive what perished, but it will perish again, if more life is not breathed into it than it enjoyed originally. Facts, dates, and names will never please the multitude, unless there is some style and manner to recommend them, and unless some novelty is struck out from their appearance. The best merit of the society lies in their

prints; for their volumes, no mortal will ever touch them but an antiquary. Their Saxon and Danish discoveries are not worth more than monuments of the Hottentots; and for Roman remains in Britain, they are upon a foot with what ideas we should get of Inigo Jones, if somebody was to publish views of huts and houses, that our officers run up at Senegal and Goree. Bishop Lyttelton used to torment me with barrows and Roman camps, and I would as soon have attended to the turf graves in our church-yards. I have no curiosity to know how awkward and clumsy men have been in the dawn of arts, or in their decay.

I exempt you entirely from my general censure on antiquaries, both for your singular modesty in publishing nothing yourself, and for collecting stone and bricks for others to build with. I wish your materials may ever fall into good hands — perhaps they will! our empire is falling to pieces! we are relapsing to a little island. In that state, men are apt to inquire how great their ancestors have been; and, when a kingdom is past doing anything, the few that are studious look into the memorials of past time; nations, like private persons, seek lustre from their progenitors, when they have none in themselves, and the farther they are from the dignity of their source. When half its colleges are tumbled down, the ancient University of Cambridge will revive from your Collections,¹ and you will be quoted as a living witness that saw its splendour.

¹ His valuable Collections, in about a hundred volumes, in folio, fairly written in his own hand, Mr. Cole, on his death in 1782, left to the British Museum, to be locked up for twenty years. His Diary, as will be seen by a specimen or two, is truly ludicrous: — “Jan. 25, 1766. Foggy. My beautiful parrot died at ten at night, without knowing the cause of his illness, he being very well last night. — Feb. 1. Fine day, and cold. Will. Wood carried three or four loads of dung into the clay-pit close. Baptized William, the son of William Grace, blacksmith, whom I married about six months before. — March 3. I baptized Sarah, the bastard daughter of the Widow Smallwood, of Eton, aged near fifty, whose husband died about a year ago. — March 6. Very fine weather. My man was blooded. I sent a loin of pork and a spare-rib to Mr. Cartwright, in London. — 27. I sent my two French wigs to my London barber to alter them, they being made so miserably I could not wear them. — June 17. I went to our new Archdeacon’s visitation at Newport-Pagnel. I took young H. Travel with me on my dun-horse, in order

Since I began this letter, I have had another curious adventure. I was in the Holbein chamber, when a chariot stopped at my door. A letter was brought up — and who should be below but — Dr. Kippis. The letter was to announce himself and his business, flattered me on my writings, desired my assistance, and particularly my direction and aid for his writing the life of my father. I desired he would walk up, and received him very civilly, taking not the smallest notice of what you had told me of his flirts at me in the new Biographia. I told him, if I had been applied to, I could have pointed out many errors in the old edition, but as they were chiefly in the printing, I supposed they would be corrected. With regard to my father's life, I said, it might be partiality, but I had such confidence in my father's virtues, that I was satisfied the more his life was examined, the clearer they would appear. That I also thought that the life of any man written under the direction of his family, did nobody honour; and that, as I was persuaded my father's would stand the test, I wished that none of his relations should interfere in it. That I did not doubt but the Doctor would speak impartially, and that was all I desired. He replied, that he did suppose I thought in that manner, and that all he asked was to be assisted in facts and dates. I said, if he would please to write the life first, and then communicate it to me, I would point out any errors in facts that I should perceive. He seemed mightily well satisfied — and so we parted — but is it not odd, that people are continually attacking me, and then come to me for assistance? — but when men write for profit, they are not very delicate.

I have resumed Mr. Baker's life, and pretty well arranged my plan; but I shall have little time to make any progress till October, as I am going soon to make some visits. Yours ever.

that he might hear the organ, he being a great psalm-singer. The most numerous appearance of clergy that I remember: forty-four dined with the Archdeacon; and, what is extraordinary, not one smoked tobacco. My new coach-horse ungain. — Aug. 16. Cool day. Tom reaped for Joe Holdom. I cudgelled Jem for staying so long on an errand," &c.—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1778.

I HAVE run through the new articles in the *Biographia*, and think them performed but by a heavy hand. Some persons have not trusted the characters of their ancestors, as I did my father's, to their own merits. On the contrary, I have met with one whose corruption is attempted to be palliated by imputing its punishment to the revenge of my father—which, by the way, is confessing the guilt of the convict. This was the late Lord Barrington,¹ who, I believe, was a very dirty fellow; for, besides being expelled the House of Commons on the affair of the Harburgh lottery, he was reckoned to have twice sold the Dissenters to the court; but in short, what credit can a *Biographia Britannica*, which ought to be a standard work, deserve, when the editor is a mercenary writer, who runs about to relations for directions, and adopts any tale they deliver to him? This very instance is a proof that it is not a jot more creditable than a peerage. The authority is said to be a nephew of Judge Foster (consequently, I suppose, a friend of Judge Barrington), and he pretends to have found a scrap of paper, nobody knows on what occasion written, that seems to be connected with nothing, and is called a palliative, if not an excuse of Lord Barrington's crime. A man is expelled from Parliament for a scandalous job, and it is called a sufficient excuse to say the minister was his enemy; and this nearly forty years after the death of both! and without any impeachment of the justice of the sentence: instead of which we are told that Lord Barrington was *suspected* of having

¹ John Shute, first Viscount Barrington in the peerage of Ireland, expelled the House of Commons in February 1723, for having promoted, abetted, and carried on that fraudulent undertaking, the Harburgh lottery. This lottery took its name from the place where it was to be drawn, the town and port of Harburgh, on the river Elbe, where the projector was to settle a trade for the woollen manufacture between England and Germany. Lord Barrington was distinguished for theological learning, and published "*Miscellanea Critica*," and an "*Essay on the several Dispensations of God to Mankind*." He died in 1734, leaving five sons, who had the rare fortune of each rising to high stations in the church, the state, the law, the army, and the navy.—E.

offended Sir Robert Walpole, who took that opportunity of being revenged. Supposing he did — which at most you see is a suspicion grounded on a suspicion — it would at least imply, that he had found a good opportunity.—A most admirable acquittal! Sir Robert Walpole was expelled for having indorsed a note that was not for his own benefit, nor ever supposed to be, and it was the act of a whole outrageous party; yet, abandoned as parliaments sometimes are, a minister would not find them very complaisant in gratifying his private revenge against a member without some notorious crime. Not a syllable is said of any defence the culprit made; and, had my father been guilty of such violence and injustice, it is totally incredible that he, whose minutest acts and his most innocent were so rigorously scrutinized, tortured, and blackened, should never have heard that act of power complained of. The present Lord Barrington, who opposed him, saw his fall, and the secret committee appointed to canvass his life, when a retrospect of twenty years was desired and only ten allowed, would certainly have pleaded for the longer term, had he had anything to say in behalf of his father's sentence. Would so warm a patriot then, though so obedient a courtier now, have suppressed the charge to this hour? This Lord Barrington, when I was going to publish the second edition of my Noble Authors, begged it as a favour of me to suppress all mention of his father — a strong presumption that he was ashamed of him. I am well repaid! but I am certainly now at liberty to record that good man. I shall — and shall take notice of the satisfactory manner in which his sons have whitewashed their patriarch!

I recollect a saying of the present peer that will divert you when contrasted with forty years of servility, which even in this age makes him a proverb. It was in his days of virtue. He said, "If I should ever be so unhappy as to have a place that would make it necessary for me to have a fine coat on a birth-day, I would pin a bank-bill on my sleeve." He had a place in less than two years, I think — and has had almost every place that every administration could bestow.¹

¹ See vol. i. p. 190. Among the Mitchell MSS. is a letter from Lord

Such were the patriots that opposed that excellent man, my father; allowed by all parties to have been as incapable of revenge as ever minister was — but whose experience of mankind drew from him that memorable saying, “that very few men ought to be prime ministers, for it is not fit many should know how bad men are;” — one can see a little of it without being a prime minister. If one shuns mankind and flies to books, one meets with their meanness and falsehood there, too! one has reason to say, there is but one good, that is God. Adieu! Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Oct. 14, 1778.

I THINK you take in no newspapers, nor I believe condescend to read any more modern than the *Paris à la Main* at the time of the *Ligue*; consequently you have not seen a new scandal on my father, which you will not wonder offends me. You cannot be interested in his defence; but, as it comprehends some very curious anecdotes, you will not grudge my indulging myself to a friend in vindicating a name so dear to me.

In the accounts of Lady Chesterfield's¹ death and fortune, it is said that the late King, at the instigation of Sir Robert Walpole, burnt his father's will which contained a large legacy to that, his supposed, daughter, and I believe his real one; for she was very like him, as her brother, General Schulembourg, is, in black, to the late King. The fact of

Barrington, in which he says, “No man knows what is good for him: my invariable rule, therefore, is to ask nothing, to refuse nothing; to let others place me, and to do my best wherever I am placed. The same strange fortune which made me secretary of war five years ago has made me chancellor of the exchequer; it may perhaps at last make me pope. I think I am equally fit to be at the head of the church as the exchequer.”—E.

¹ Malosina de Schulenburg, a natural daughter of George I, by Miss Schulenburg, afterwards created Duchess of Kendal. She was created, in 1722, Countess of Walsingham and Baroness of Aldborough, and was the widow of Philip Dormer Stanhope, the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield, who died in 1773.—E.

suppressing the will is indubitably true; the instigator most false, as I can demonstrate thus:—

When the news arrived of the death of George the First, my father carried the account from Lord Townshend to the then Prince of Wales. One of the first acts of royalty is for the new monarch to make a speech to the privy council. Sir Robert asked the King who he would please to have draw the Speech, which was, in fact, asking who was to be prime minister; to which his Majesty replied, Sir Spencer Compton. It is a wonderful anecdote, and but little known, that the new premier, a very dull man, could not draw the Speech, and the person to whom he applied was the deposed premier. The Queen, who favoured my father, observed how unfit a man was for successor, who was reduced to beg assistance of his predecessor. The council met as soon as possible, the next morning at latest. There Archbishop Wake, with whom one copy of the will had been deposited, (as another was, I think, with the Duke of Wolfenbottle, who had a pension for sacrificing it, which, *I know*, the late Duke of Newcastle transacted,) advanced, and delivered the will to the King, who put it into his pocket, and went out of council without opening it, the Archbishop not having courage or presence of mind to desire it to be read, as he ought to have done.

These circumstances, which I solemnly assure you are strictly true, prove that my father neither advised, nor was consulted; nor is it credible that the King in one night's time should have passed from the intention of disgracing him, to make him his bosom confidant on so delicate an affair.

I was once talking to the late Lady Suffolk, the former mistress, on that extraordinary event. She said, "I cannot justify the deed to the legatees; but towards his father, the late King was justifiable, for George the First had burnt two wills made in favour of George the Second." I suppose they were the testaments of the Duke and Duchess of Zell, parents of George the First's wife, whose treatment of her they always resented.

I said, *I know* the transactions of the Duke of Newcastle. The late Lord Waldegrave showed me a letter from that Duke to the first Earl of Waldegrave, then ambassador at Paris, with directions about that transaction, or, at least, about payment of the pension, I forget which.¹ I have somewhere, but cannot turn to it now, a memorandum of that affair, and who the Prince was, whom I may mistake in calling Duke of Wolfenbottle. There was a third copy of the will, I likewise forget with whom deposited. The newspaper says, which is true, that Lord Chesterfield filed a bill in chancery against the late King to oblige him to produce the will, and was silenced, I think, by payment of twenty thousand pounds. There was another legacy to his own daughter the Queen of Prussia, which has at times been, and, I believe, is still claimed by the King of Prussia.

Do not mention any part of this story; but it is worth preserving, as I am sure you are satisfied with my scrupulous veracity. It may perhaps be authenticated hereafter by collateral evidence that may come out. If ever true history does come to light, my father's character will have just honour paid to it. Lord Chesterfield, one of his sharpest enemies, has not, with all his prejudices, left a very unfavourable account of him, and it would alone be raised by a comparison of their two characters. Think of one who calls Sir Robert the corrupter of youth, leaving a system of education to poison them from their nursery! Chesterfield, Pulteney, and Bolingbroke were the saints that reviled my father! I beg your pardon, but you will allow me to open my heart to you when it is full. Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

October 23, 1778.

* * * * * HAVING thus told you all I know, I shall add a few words, to say I conclude you have known as much,

¹ See Walpole's *Memoires of George the Second*, vol. ii. p. 458.—E.

by my not having heard from you. Should the post-office or secretary's office set their wits at work to bring to light all the intelligence contained under the above hiatus, I am confident they will discover nothing, though it gives an exact description of all they have been about themselves.

My personal history is very short. I have had an assembly and the rheumatism — and am buying a house — and it rains — and I shall plant the roses against my treillage tomorrow. Thus you know what I have done, suffered, am doing, and shall do. Let me know as much of you, in quantity, not in quality. Introductions to, and conclusions of, letters are as much out of fashion, as *to*, *at*, &c. on letters. This sublime age reduces everything to its quintessence: all periphrases and expletives are so much in disuse, that I suppose soon the only way of making love will be to say "Lie down." Luckily, the lawyers will not part with any synonymous words, and will, consequently, preserve the redundancies of our language — Dixi.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

October 26, 1778.

I HAVE finished the Life of Mr. Baker, will have it transcribed, and send it to you. I have omitted several little particulars that are in your notes, for two reasons; one, because so much is said in the Biographia; and the other, because I have rather drawn a character of him, than meant a circumstantial life. In the justice I have done to him, I trust I shall have pleased you. I have much greater doubt of that effect in what I have said of his principles and party. It is odd, perhaps, to have made use of the life of a high churchman for expatiating on my own very opposite principles; but it gave me so fair an opportunity of discussing those points, that I very naturally embraced it. I have done due honour to his immaculate conscience, but have not spared the cause in which he fell, — or rather rose, — for the ruin of his fortune was the triumph of his virtue.

As you know I do not love the press, you may be sure I have no thoughts of printing this life at present; nay, I beg you will not only not communicate it, but take care it never should be printed without my consent. I have written what presented itself; I should perhaps choose to soften several passages; and I trust it to you for your own satisfaction, not as a finished thing, or as I am determined it should remain.

Another favour I beg of you is to criticise it as largely and severely as you please: you have a right so to do, as it is built with your own materials; nay, you have a right to scold if I have, nay, since I have, employed them so differently from your intention. All my excuse is, that you communicated them to one who did not deceive you, and who you was pretty sure would make nearly the use of them that he has made. Was not you? did not you suspect a little that I could not even write a Life of Mr. Baker without talking Whiggism!—Well, if I have ill-treated the cause, I am sure I have exalted the martyr. I have thrown new light on his virtue from his notes on the Gazettes, and you will admire him more, though you may love me less, for my chymistry. I should be truly sorry if I did lose a scruple of your friendship. You have ever been as candid to me, as Mr. Baker was to his antagonists, and our friendship is another proof that men of the most opposite principles can agree in everything else, and not quarrel about them.

As my manuscript contains above twenty pages of my writing on larger paper than this, you cannot receive it speedily—however, I have performed my promise, and I hope you will not be totally discontent, though I am not satisfied with myself. I have executed it by snatches and by long interruptions; and not having been eager about it, I find I wanted that ardour to inspire me; another proof of what I told you, that my small talent is waning, and wants provocatives. It shall be a warning to me. Adieu!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington Street, Nov. 4, 1778.

You will see by my secretary's hand, that I am not able to write myself; indeed, I am in bed with the gout in six places, like Daniel in the den; but, as the lions are slumbering round me, and leave me a moment of respite, I employ it to give you one. You have misunderstood me, dear Sir: I have not said a word that will lower Mr. Baker's character; on the contrary, I think he will come out brighter from my ordeal. In truth, as I have drawn out his life from your papers, it is a kind of political epic, in which his conscience is the hero that always triumphs over his interest upon the most opposite occasions. Shall you dislike your saint in this light? I had transcribed about half when I fell ill last week. If the gout does not seize my right hand, I shall probably have full leisure to finish it during my recovery, but shall certainly not be able to send it to you by Mr. Lort.

Your promise fully satisfies me. My life can never extend to twenty years.¹ Any one that saw me this moment would not take me for a Methusalem. I have not strength to dictate more now, except to add, that if Mr. Nicholls has seen my narrative about Chatterton, it can only be my letter to Mr. Barrett, of which you have a copy; the larger one has not yet been out of my own house. Yours most sincerely.

TO LADY BROWNE.²

Arlington Street, Nov. 5, 1778.

YOUR ladyship is exceedingly kind and charitable, and the least I can do in return is to do all I can — dictate a letter to you. I have not been out of bed longer than it was necessary to have it made, once a day, since last Thursday.

¹ Mr. Cole had informed Walpole that his collections were not to be opened until twenty years after his death. See *antè*, p. 15.—E.

² Now first printed. See vol. v. p. 184.

The gout is in both my feet, both my knees, and in my left hand and elbow. Had I a mind to brag, I could boast of a little rheumatism too, but I scorn to set value on such a trifle; nay, I will own that I have felt little acute pain. My chief propensity to exaggeration would be on the miserable nights I have passed; and yet whatever I should say would not be beyond what I thought I suffered. I have been constantly as broad awake as any Mrs. Candour that is always gaping for Scandal,¹ except when I have taken opiates, and then my dreams have been as extravagant as all Mrs. Candour adds to what she hears. In short, Madam, not to tire you with more details, though you have ordered them, I am so weak that I am able to see nobody at all, and when I shall be recovered enough to take possession of this new lease, as it is called, the mansion, I believe, will be so shattered that it won't be worth repairs. Is it not very foolish, then, to be literally buying a new house? Is it not verifying Pope's line, when I choose a pretty situation,

“ But just to look about us and to die? ”

I am sorry Lady Jane's lot is fallen in Westphalia, where so great a hog is lord of the manor. He is like the dragon of Wantley,

“ And houses and churches
To him are geese and turkeys ; ”

so I don't wonder that he has gobbled her two cows.

Lady Blandford is delightful in congratulating me upon having the gout in town, and staying in the country herself. Nay, she is very insolent in presuming to be the only person invulnerable. If I could wish her any harm, it should be that she might feel for one quarter of an hour a taste of the mortifications that I suffered from eleven last night till four this morning, and I am sure she would never dare to have a spark of courage again. I can only wish her in Grosvenor-square,

¹ Sheridan's popular comedy of the “ School for Scandal,” which came out at Drury-lane theatre in May 1777, was at this time as much the favourite of the town as ever.—E.

where she would run no risks. Her reputation for obstinacy is so well established, that she might take advice from her true friends for a twelvemonth, before we should believe our own ears. However, as everybody has some weak part, I know she will do for others more than for herself; and therefore, pray Madam, tell her, that I am sure it is bad for your ladyship to stay in the country at this time of year, and that reason I am sure will bring you both. I really must rest.

TO LADY BROWNE.¹

Arlington Street, Dec. 18, 1778.

My not writing with my own hand, to thank your ladyship for your very obliging letter, is the worst symptom that remains with me, Madam: all pain and swelling are gone; and I hope in a day or two to get a glove even on my right hand, and to walk with help into the next room by the end of next week. I did, I confess, see a great deal too much company too early; and was such an old child as to prattle abundantly, till I was forced to shut myself up for a week and see nobody; but I am quite recovered, and the emptiness of the town will soon preserve me from any excesses.

I am exceedingly glad to hear your ladyship finds so much benefit from the air: I own I thought you looked ill the last time I had the honour of seeing you; and though I am sorry to hear you talk with so much satisfaction of a country life, I am not selfish enough to wish you to leave Tusmore² a day before your health is quite re-established, nor to envy Mr. Fermor so agreeable an addition to his society and charming seat.

Poor Lady Albemarle is indeed very miserable and full of apprehensions; though the incredible zeal of the navy for Admiral Keppel crowns him with glory, and the indignation of mankind, and the execration of Sir Hugh, add to the triumph.

¹ Now first printed.

² Lady Browne's first husband was Henry Fermor, Esq. grandfather of Mr. Fermor of Tusmore House. She was a Miss Sheldon.—E.

Indeed, I still think Lady A.'s fears may be well founded: some slur may be *procured* on her son; and his own bad nerves, and worse constitution, may not be able to stand agitation and suspense.¹

Lady Blandford has had a cold, but I hear is well again, and has generally two tables. She will be a loss indeed to all her friends, and to hundreds more; but she cannot be immortal, nor would be, if she could.

The writings are not yet signed, Madam, for my house, but I am in no doubt of having it; yet I shall not think of going into it till the spring, as I cannot *enjoy* this year's gout in it, and will not venture catching a codicil, by going backwards and forwards to it before it is aired.

I know no particular news, but that Lord Bute was thought in great danger yesterday; I have heard nothing of him today. I do not know even a match, but of some that are going to be divorced; the fate of one of the latter is to be turned into an exaltation, and is treated by her family and friends in

¹ Some charges having been brought against Admiral Keppel for his conduct at the battle off Ushant, by Sir Hugh Palliser, his vice-admiral, he was tried for the same, and not only unanimously acquitted, but the prosecution declared malicious. This verdict gave such general satisfaction, that London was illuminated for two nights; upon one of which a mob, consisting in great part of sailors who had served under Keppel, broke all the windows in the house of his accuser. The city of London voted the Admiral the freedom of the corporation. In 1782, he was created Viscount Keppel, and appointed first lord of the admiralty. He died unmarried, in October 1786. The following is a part of Mr. Burke's beautiful panegyric on him, at the conclusion of his Letter to a Noble Lord:—"I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age, and I loved and cultivated him accordingly. It was at his trial that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory; what part my son took in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connexions; with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt, just as I should have felt such friendship on such an occasion. I partook, indeed, of this honour with several of the first, and best, and ablest in the kingdom; but I was behind with none of them; and I am sure that if, to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good-will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue."—E.

quite a new style, to the discomfit of all prudery. It puts me in mind of Lord Lansdowne's lines in the room in the Tower where my father had been confined,

“Some fall so hard, they bound and rise again.”

Methinks, however, it is a little hard on Lord George Germaine, that in four months after seeing a Duchess of Dorset, he may see a Lord Middlesex too; for so old the egg is said to be, that is already prepared. If this trade goes on, half the peeresses will have two eldest sons with both fathers alive at the same time. Lady Holderness expresses nothing but grief and willingness to receive her daughter¹ again on any terms, which probably will happen; for the daughter has already opened her eyes, is sensible of her utter ruin, and has written to Lord Carmarthen and Madam Cordon, acknowledging her guilt, and begging to be remembered only with pity, which is sufficient to make one pity her.

I would beg pardon for so long a letter, but your ladyship desired intelligence, and I know a long letter from London is not uncomfortable at Christmas, even in the most comfortable house in the country. Perhaps my own forced idleness has a little contributed to lengthen it; still I hope it implies great readiness to obey your ladyship's commands, in your most obedient humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.²

Arlington Street, Dec. 24, 1778.

It was an additional mortification to my illness, my lord, that I was not able to thank your lordship with my own hand

¹ Amelia D'Arcy, Baroness Conyers, daughter of Robert, fourth Earl of Holderness, married to Lord Carmarthen; who had eloped with Captain John Byron, father of the great poet.—E.

² Now first printed. David Stewart Erskine, eleventh Earl of Buchan. He was intended for public life, but shortly after his succeeding to the family honours, in 1767, he retired to Scotland, and devoted himself to literature. His principal works were, an *Essay on the Lives of Fletcher of Saltoun* and the poet Thomson, and a *Life of Napier of Merchiston*. He died at Dryburgh Abbey, in 1829, at the age of eighty-seven.—E.

for the honour of your letter, and for your goodness in remembering an old man, who must with reason consider himself as forgotten, when he never was of importance, and is now almost useless to himself. Frequent severe fits of the gout have a good deal disabled me from pursuing the trifling studies in which I could pretend to know anything; or at least have given me an indifference, that makes me less ready in answering questions than I may have been formerly; and as my papers are in the country, whither at present I am not able to go, I fear I can give but unsatisfactory replies to your lordship's queries.

The two very curious pictures of King James and his Queen (I cannot recollect whether the third or fourth of the name, but I know that she was a princess of Sweden or Denmark,¹ and that her arms are on her portrait,) were at the palace at Kensington, and I imagine are there still. I had obtained leave from the Lord Chamberlain to have drawings made of them, and Mr. Wale actually began them for me; but he made such slow progress, and I was so called off from the thought of them by indispositions and other avocations, that they were never finished; and Mr. Wale may, perhaps, still have the beginnings he made.

At the Duke of Devonshire's at Hardwicke, there is a valuable though poorly painted picture of James V. and Mary of Guise, his second queen: it is remarkable from the great resemblance of Mary Queen of Scots to her father; I mean in Lord Morton's picture of her, and in the image of her on her tomb at Westminster, which agree together, and which I take to be the genuine likeness. I have doubts on Lord Burlington's picture, and on Dr. Mead's. The nose in both is thicker, and also fuller at bottom than on the tomb; though it is a little supported by her coins.

There is a much finer portrait — indeed, an excellent head, — of the Lady Margaret Douglas at Mr. Carteret's at Hawnes in Bedfordshire, the late Lord Granville's. It is a very

¹ James the First married, in 1590, Anne, daughter of Frederick King of Denmark.—E.

shrewd countenance, and at the same time with great goodness of character. Lord Scarborough has a good picture, in the style of Holbein at least, of Queen Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII, and of her second or third husband (for, if I don't mistake, she had three); but indeed, my lord, these things are so much out of my memory at present, that I speak with great diffidence. I cannot even recollect anything else to your lordship's purpose; but I flatter myself, that these imperfect notices will at least be a testimony of my readiness to obey your lordship's commands, as that I am, with great respect, my lord, your lordship's obedient humble servant.

TO EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.¹

DEAR SIR,

[1778.]

I HAVE gone through your Inquisitor's attack,² and am far from being clear that it deserves your giving yourself the trouble of an answer, as neither the detail nor the result affects your argument. So far from it, many of his reproofs are levelled at your having quoted a wrong page; he confessing often that what you have cited is in the author referred to, but not precisely in the individual spot. If St. Peter is attended by a corrector of the press, you will certainly never be admitted where he is a porter. I send you my copy, because I scribbled my remarks. I do not send them with the impertinent presumption of suggesting a hint to you, but to prove I did not grudge the trouble of going through such a book when you desired it, and to show how little struck me as of any weight.

¹ Now first collected.

² "An Examination of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. By Henry Edward Davis, B.A. of Baliol College, Oxford." He was born in 1756, and died in 1784, at the early age of twenty-seven. He was a native of Windsor, and is believed to have received a present from George the Third for this production.—E.

I have set down nothing on your imputed plagiarisms; for, if they are so, no argument that has ever been employed must be used again, even where the passage necessary is applied to a different purpose. An author is not allowed to be master of his own works; but, by Davis's new law, the first person that cites him would be so. You probably looked into Middleton, Dodwell, &c.; had the same reflections on the same circumstances, or conceived them so as to recollect them, without remembering what suggested them. Is this plagiarism? If it is, Davis and such cavillers might go a short step further, and insist that an author should peruse every work antecedently written on every subject at all collateral to his own, — not to assist him, but to be sure to avoid every material touched by his predecessors.

I will make but one remark on such divine champions. Davis and his prototypes tell you Middleton, &c. have used the same objections, and they have been *confuted: answering*, in the theologic dictionary, signifying *confuting*; no matter whether there is sense, argument, truth, in the answer or not.

Upon the whole, I think ridicule is the only answer such a work is entitled to. The ablest answer which you can make (which would be the ablest answer that could be made) would never have any authority with the cabal, yet would allow a sort of dignity to the author. His patrons will always maintain that he vanquished you, unless you made him too ridiculous for them to dare to revive his name. You might divert yourself, too, with Alma Mater, the church, employing a *goujat* to defend the citadel, while the generals repose in their tents. If Irenæus, St. Augustine, &c. did not set apprentices and proselytes to combat Celsus and the adversaries of the new religion — but early bishops had not five or six thousand pounds a-year.

In short, dear Sir, I wish you not to lose your time; that is, either not reply, or set *your mark* on your answer, that it may always be read with the rest of your works.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 3, 1779.

At last, after ten weeks, I have been able to remove hither, in hopes change of air and the frost will assist my recovery; though I am not one of those ancients that forget the register, and think they are to be as well as ever after every fit of illness. As yet I can barely creep about the room in the middle of the day.

I have made my printer (now my seeretary) eopy out the rest of Mr. Baker's Life; for my own hand will barely serve to write neecessary letters, and eomplains even of them. If you know of any very trusty person passing between London and Cambridge, I would send it to you, but should not care to trust it by the eoach, nor to any giddy undergraduate that comes to town to see a play; and, besides, I mean to return you your own notes. I will say no more than I have said in my apology to you for the manner in which I have written this life. With regard to Mr. Baker himself, I am eonfident you will find that I have done full justice to his work and charaeter. I do not expect you to approve the inferencees I draw against some other persons; and yet, if his conduet was meritorious, it would not be easy to exeuse those who were *active* after doing what he would not do. You will not understand this sentence till you have seen the Life.

I hope you have not been untiled or unpaled by the tempest on New-year's morning.¹ I have lost two beautiful elms in a row before my windows here, and had the skylight demolished in town. Lady Pomfret's Gothie house in my street lost one of the stone towers, like those at King's Chapel, and it was beaten through the roof. The top of our eross, too, at Amptill was thrown down, as I hear from Lady Ossory this morning. I remember to have been told that Bishop Kidder

¹ On the morning of the 1st of January 1779, London was visited by one of the most violent tempests ever known. Scarcely a public building in the metropolis escaped without damage.—E.

and his wife were killed in their bed in the palace of Gloucester in 1709,¹ and yet his heirs were sued for dilapidations.

Lord de Ferrers,² who deserves his ancient honours, is going to repair the castle at Tamworth, and has flattered me that he will consult me. He has a violent passion for ancestry — and, consequently, I trust will not stake the patrimony of the Ferrarii, Townshends, and Comptons, at the hazard-table. A little pride would not hurt our nobility, cock and hen. Adieu, dear Sir; send me a good account of yourself. Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1779.

YOUR flight to Bath would have much surprised me, if Mr. Churchill, who, I think, heard it from Stanley, had not prepared me for it. Since you was amused, I am glad you went, especially as you escaped being initiated in Mrs. Miller's follies at Batheaston,³ which you would have mentioned. She would certainly have sent some trapes of a Muse to press you, had she known what good epigrams you write.

I went to Strawberry partly out of prudence, partly from *ennui*. I thought it best to air myself before I go in and out of hot rooms here, and had my house thoroughly warmed for a week previously, and then only stirred from the red room to the blue on the same floor. I stayed five days, and was neither the better nor the worse for it. I was quite tired with having neither company, books, nor amusement of any kind. Either from the emptiness of the town, or

¹ The memorable storm here alluded to took place in November 1703, and Bishop Kidder and his lady perished in their bed at the episcopal palace at Wells by the fall of a stack of chimneys. They were privately interred in the cathedral; and one of his daughters, dying single, directed by her will a monument to be erected for her parents.—E.

² Robert, sixth Earl Ferrers. He had just succeeded to the title, by the death of his brother Washington, vice-admiral of the blue; who had begun to rebuild the mansion of Stanton-Harold, in Leicestershire, according to a plan of his own, and lived to see it nearly finished.—E.

³ See vol. v. p. 406.—E.

that ten weeks of gout have worn out the patience of all my acquaintance, but I do not see three persons in three days. This gives me but an uncomfortable prospect for my latter days: it is but probable that I may be a cripple in a fit or two more, if I have strength to go through them; and as that will be long life, one outlives one's acquaintance. I cannot make new acquaintance, nor interest myself at all about the young, except those that belong to me; nor does that go beyond contributing to their pleasures, without having much satisfaction in their conversation — But — one must take everything as it comes, and make the best of it. I have had a much happier life than I deserve, and than millions that deserve better. I should be very weak if I could not bear the uncomfortableness of old age, when I can afford what comforts it is capable of. How many poor old people have none of them! I am ashamed whenever I am peevish, and recollect that I have fire and servants to help me.

I hear Admiral Keppel is in high spirits with the great respect and zeal expressed for him. In my own opinion, his constitution will not stand the struggle. I am very uneasy too for the Duke of Richmond, who is at Portsmouth, and will be at least as much agitated.

Sir William Meredith has written a large pamphlet, and a very good one. It is to show, that whenever the Grecian republics taxed their dependents, the latter resisted, and shook off the yoke. He has printed but twelve copies: the Duke of Gloucester sent me one of them. There is an anecdote of my father, on the authority of old Jack White, which I doubt. It says, he would not go on with the excise scheme, though his friends advised it. I cannot speak to the particular event, as I was then at school; but it was more like him to have yielded, against his sentiments, to Mr. Pelham and his candid — or say, plausible and timid friends. I have heard him say, that he never did give up his opinion to such men but he always repented it. However, the anecdote in the book would be more to his honour. But what a strange man is Sir William! I suppose, now he has written this

book, he will change his opinion, and again be for carrying on the war — or, if he does not know his own mind for two years together, why will he take places, to make everybody doubt his honesty?

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

January 15, 1779.

I SEND you by Dr. Jacob, as you desired, my life of Mr. Baker, and with it your own materials. I beg you will communicate my manuscript to nobody, but if you think it worth your trouble I will consent to your transcribing it; but on one condition, and a silly one for me to exact, who am as old as you, and broken to pieces, and very unlikely to survive you; but, should so improbable a thing happen, I must exact that you will keep your transcript sealed up, with orders written on the cover to be restored to me in case of an accident, for I should certainly dislike very much to see it printed without my consent.

I should not think of your copying it, if you did not love to transcribe, and sometimes things of as little value as my manuscript. I shall beg to have it returned to me by a safe hand as soon as you can, for I have nothing but the foul copy which nobody can read, I believe, but I and my secretary.

I am actually printing my justification about Chatterton, but only two hundred copies to give away; for I hate calling in the whole town to a fray, of which otherwise probably not one thousand persons would ever hear. You shall have a copy as soon as ever it is finished, which my printer says will be in three weeks.

You know my printer is my secretary too: do not imagine I am giving myself airs of a numerous household of officers. I shall be glad to see the letter of Mr. Baker you mentioned. You will perceive two or three notes in my manuscript in a different hand from mine, or that of my amanuensis (still the same officer): they were added by a person I lent it to, and I have effaced part of the last.

I must finish, lest Dr. Jacob should call, and my parcel not be ready. I hope your sore throat is gone; my gout has returned again a little with taking the air only, but did not stay — however, I am still confined, and almost ready to remain so, to prevent disappointment. Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington Street, Jan. 28, 1779.

I WRITE in as much hurry as you did, dear Sir, and thank you for the motive of yours: mine is to prevent your fatiguing yourself in copying my manuscript, for which I am not in the least haste: pray keep it till another safe conveyance presents itself. You may bring the gout, that is, I am sorry to hear, flying about you, into your hand by wearying it.

How can you tell me I may well be cautious about my manuscript and yet advise me to print it?—No—I shall not provoke nests of hornets, till I am dust, as they will be too.

If I dictated tales when ill in my bed, I must have been worse than I thought; for, as I know nothing of it, I must have been light-headed. Mr. Lort was certainly misinformed, though he seems to have told you the story kindly to the honour of my philosophy or spirits — but I had rather have no fame than what I do not deserve.

I am fretful or low-spirited at times in the gout, like other weak old men, and have less to boast than most men. I have some strange things in my drawer, even wilder than the Castle of Otranto, and called Hieroglyphic Tales; but they were not written lately, nor in the gout, nor, whatever they may seem, written when I was out of my senses. I showed one or two of them to a person since my recovery, who may have mentioned them, and occasioned Mr. Lort's misintelligence. I did not at all perceive that the latter looked ill; and hope he is quite recovered. You shall see Chatterton soon. Adieu!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

February 4, 1779.

I HAVE received the manuscript, and though you forbid my naming the subject more, I love truth, and truth in a friend so much, that I must tell you, that so far from taking your sincerity ill, I had much rather you should act with your native honest sincerity than say you was pleased with my manuscript. I have always tried as much as is in human nature to divest myself of the self-love of an author; in the present case I had less difficulty than ever, for I never thought my *Life of Mr. Baker* one of my least indifferent works. You might, believe me, have sent me your long letter; whatever it contained, it would not have made a momentary cloud between us. I have not only friendship, but great gratitude for you, for a thousand instances of kindness; and should detest any writing of mine that made a breach with a friend, and still more, if it could make me forget obligations.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

February 18, 1779.

I SENT you my *Chattertoniad*¹ last week, in hopes it would sweeten your pouting; but I find it has not, or has miscarried; for you have not acknowledged the receipt with your usual punctuality.

Have you seen Hasted's new *History of Kent*?² I am sailing through it, but am stopped every minute by careless mistakes. They tell me the author has good materials, but is very negligent, and so I perceive. He has not even given a list of monuments in the churches, which I do not remember

¹ "A Letter to the Editor of the *Miscellanies of Thomas Chatterton*." Strawberry Hill, 1779, 8vo.—E.

² "The *History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*; by Edward Hasted;" four volumes, folio, 1778–1799." A second and improved edition, in twelve volumes, octavo, appeared in 1797–1801. Mr. Hasted died in 1812, at the age of eighty.—E.

in any history of a county; but he is rich in pedigrees; though I suppose they have many errors too, as I have found some in those I am acquainted with. It is unpardonable to be inaccurate in a work in which one nor expects nor demands anything but fidelity.¹

We have a great herald arising in a very noble race, Lord de Ferrers. I hope to make him a Gothic architect too, for he is going to repair Tamworth Castle, and flatters me that I shall give him sweet counsel. I enjoin him to *kernellare*. Adieu! Yours ever.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.²

Arlington Street, March 12, 1779.

I HAVE received this moment from your bookseller, Sir, the valuable present of the second volume of your "Annals," and beg leave to return you my grateful thanks for so agreeable a gift, of which I can only have taken a look enough to lament that you do not intend to continue the work. Repeated and severe attacks of the gout forbid my entertaining visions of pleasures to come; but though I might not have the advantage of your labours, Sir, I wish too well to posterity not to be sorry that you check your hand.

Lord Buchan did me the honour lately of consulting me on portraits of illustrious Scots. I recollect that there is at Windsor a very good portrait of your countryman Duns Scotus,³ whose name struck me on just turning over your

¹ In a memoir of himself, which he drew up for the Gentleman's Magazine, to be published after his death, he says, "his laborious History of Kent took him up more than forty years; during the whole series of which he spared neither pains nor expense to bring it to maturity."—E.

² Now first collected.

³ Granger considers the portrait at Windsor not to be genuine. Of Duns Scotus, he says, "It requires one-half of a man's life to read the works of this profound doctor, and the other to understand his subtleties. His printed works are in twelve volumes, in folio! His manuscripts are sleeping in Merton College, Oxford. Voluminous works frequently arise from the ignorance and confused ideas of the authors: if angels, says Mr. Norris, were writers, we should have few folios. He was the head of the sect of schoolmen called Scotists.—He died in 1308."—E.

volume. A good print was made from that picture some years ago, but I believe it is now very scarce: as it is not worth while to trouble his lordship with another letter for that purpose only, may I take the liberty, Sir, of begging you to mention it to his lordship?

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, March 28, 1779.

YOUR last called for no answer; and I have so little to tell you, that I only write to-day to avoid the air of remissness. I came hither on Friday, for this last week has been too hot to stay in London; but March is arrived this morning with his north-easterly malice, and I suppose will assert his old-style claim to the third of April. The poor infant apricots will be the victim to that Herod of the almanack. I have been much amused with new travels through Spain by a Mr. Swinburne¹—at least with the Alhambra, of the inner parts of which there are two beautiful prints. The Moors were the most polished, and had most taste of any people in the Gothic ages; and I hate the knave Ferdinand and his bigoted Queen for destroying them. These new travels are simple, and do tell you a little more than late voyagers, by whose accounts one would think there was nothing in Spain but muleteers and fandangos. In truth there does not seem to be much worth seeing but prospects; and those, unless I were a bird, I would never visit, when the accommodations are so wretched.

Mr. Cumberland has given the town a masque, called

¹ "Travels through Spain in the Years 1775 and 1776; in which several Monuments of Roman and Moorish Architecture are illustrated by accurate Drawings taken on the spot. By Henry Swinburne." London, 1779, 4to. Mr. Swinburne also published, in 1783-5, his "Travels in the Two Sicilies during the Years 1777-8-9, and 1780." This celebrated traveller was the youngest son of Sir John Swinburne, of Capheaton, Northumberland; the long-established seat of that ancient Roman Catholic family. Pecuniary embarrassments, arising from the marriage of his daughter to Paul Benfield, Esq. and consequent involvement in the misfortunes of that adventurer, induced him to obtain a place in the newly-ceded settlement of Trinidad, where he died in 1803.—E.

Calypso,¹ which is a prodigy of dulness. Would you believe, that such a sentimental writer would be so gross as to make cantharides one of the ingredients of a love-potion for enamouring Telemachus? If you think I exaggerate, here are the lines :

“ To these, the hot Hispanian fly
Shall bid his languid pulse beat high.”

Proteus and Antiope are Minerva's missionaries for securing the prince's virtue, and in recompense they are married and crowned king and queen !

I have bought at Hudson's sale a fine design of a chimney-piece, by Holbein, for Henry VIII. If I had a room left, I would erect. It is certainly not so Gothic as that in my Holbein room ; but there is a great deal of taste for that bastard style ; perhaps it was executed at Nonsuch. I do intend under Mr. Essex's inspection, to begin my offices next spring. It is late in my day, I confess, to return to brick and mortar ; but I shall be glad to perfect my plan, or the next possessor will marry my castle to a Doric stable. There is a perspective through two or three rooms in the Alhambra, that might easily be improved into Gothic, though there seems but small affinity between them ; and they might be finished within with Dutch tiles, and painting, or bits of ordinary marble, as there must be gilding. Mosaic seems to be their chief ornaments, for walls, ceilings, and floors. Fancy must sport in the furniture, and mottos might be gallant, and would be very Arabesque. I would have a mixture of colours, but with a strict attention to harmony and taste ; and some one should predominate, as supposing it the favourite colour of the lady who was sovereign of the knight's affections who built the house. Carpets are classically Mahometans, and fountains — but, alas ! our climate till last summer was never romantic ! Were I not so old, I would at least build a Moorish novel — for you see my head runs on Granada — and by taking the

¹ “ Calypso ” was brought out at Covent-Garden theatre, but was performed only a few nights. It was imprudently ushered in by a prelude, in which the author treated the newspaper editors as a set of unprincipled fellows.—E.

most picturesque parts of the Mahometan and Catholic religions, and with the mixture of African and Spanish names, one might make something very agreeable — at least I will not give the hint to Mr. Cumberland. Adieu! Yours ever.

TO EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.¹

[1779.]

THE penetration, solidity, and taste, that made you the first of historians, dear Sir, prevent my being surprised at your being the best writer of controversial pamphlets too.² I have read you with more precipitation than such a work deserved, but I could not disobey you and detain it. Yet even in that hurry I could discern, besides a thousand beauties and strokes of wit, the inimitable eighty-third page, and the conscious dignity that you maintain throughout, over your monkish antagonists. When you are so superior in argument, it would look like insensibility to the power of your reasoning, to select transient passages for commendation; and yet I must mention one that pleased me particularly, from the delicacy of the severity, and from its novelty too; it is, *bold is not the word*. This is the feathered arrow of Cupid, that is more formidable than the club of Hercules. I need not specify thanks, when I prove how much I have been pleased. Your most obliged.

¹ Now first collected.

² Gibbon's celebrated "Vindication" of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Chapters of his History appeared early in the year 1779. "I adhered," he says, in his Memoirs, "to the wise resolution of trusting myself and my writings to the candour of the public, till Mr. Davis of Oxford presumed to attack, not the faith, but the fidelity of the historian. My Vindication, expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for a moment the busy and idle metropolis; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print it in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the History itself. At the distance of twelve years, I calmly affirm my judgment of Davis, Chelsum, &c. A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation. They, however, were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was, indeed, neglected; and I dare not boast the making Dr. Watson a bishop: he is a prelate of a large mind and a liberal spirit: but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a royal pension to Mr. Davis, and of collating Dr. Althorpe to an archiepiscopal living."—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington Street, April 12, 1779.

As your gout was so concise, I will not condole on it, but I am sorry you are liable to it if you do but take the air. Thank you for telling me of the vendible curiosities at the Alderman's. For St. Peter's portrait to hang to a fairie's watch, I shall not think of it, both as I do not believe it very like, and as it is composed of invisible writing, for which my eyes are not young enough. In truth, I have almost left off making purchases; I have neither room for anything more, nor inclination for them, as I reckon everything very dear when one has so little time to enjoy it. However, I cannot say but the plates by Rubens do tempt me a little — yet, as I do not care to buy even Rubens in a poke, I should wish to know if the Alderman would let me see if it were but one. Would he be persuaded? I would pay for the carriage, though I should not buy them.

Lord de Ferrers will be infinitely happy with the sight of the pedigree, and I will certainly tell him of it, and how kind you are.

Strype's account, or rather Stow's, of Richard's person is very remarkable — but I have done with endeavouring at truth. Weeds grow more naturally than what one plants. I hear your Cantabrigians are still unshaken Chattertonians. Many men are about falsehood like girls about the first man that makes love to them: a handsomer, a richer, or even a sincerer lover cannot eradicate the first impression — but a sillier swain, or a sillier legend, sometimes gets into the head of the miss or the learned man, and displaces the antecedent folly. Truth's kingdom is not of this world.

I do not know whether our clergy are growing Mahometans or not: they certainly are not what they profess themselves — but as you and I should not agree perhaps in assigning the same defects to them, I will not enter on a subject which I have promised you to drop. All I allude to now is, the

shocking murder of Miss Ray¹ by a divine. In my own opinion, we are growing more fit for Bedlam than for Mahomet's paradise. The poor criminal in question, I am persuaded, is mad—and the misfortune is, the law does not know how to define the shades of madness; and thus there are twenty outpensioners of Bedlam, for one that is confined. You, dear Sir, have chosen a wiser path to happiness by depending on yourself for amusement. Books and past ages draw one into no scrapes, and perhaps it is best not to know much of men till they are dead. I wish you health—you want nothing else. I am, dear Sir, yours most truly.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington Street, April 20, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received the plates very safely, but hope you nor the Alderman² will take it ill that I return them. They are extremely pretty, and uncommonly well preserved; but I am sure they are not by Rubens, nor I believe after his designs, for I am persuaded they are older than his time. In truth, I have a great many of the same sort, and do not wish for more. I shall send them back on Thursday by the Fly, and will beg you to inquire after them; and I trust they will arrive as safely as they did to

Yours ever.

¹ On the 7th of April, Miss Reay, who had been the mistress of Lord Sandwich for twenty years, by whom she was the mother of many children, was shot, on her leaving Covent-Garden theatre, by the Rev. James Hackman, who had the living of Wiverton, in Norfolk; a young man not half her age, who had imbibed a violent passion for her, whom he first met at Lord Sandwich's seat at Hinchinbroke, where he had been frequently invited to dine while commanding a recruiting party at Huntingdon; he being, previously to his entering the church, a lieutenant in the 68th regiment of foot. Having shot Miss Reay, he fired a pistol at himself; but, being only wounded by it, he was tried at the Old Bailey for murder, convicted, and executed.—E.

² Alderman John Boydell, an English engraver; distinguished as an encourager of the fine arts. In 1790 he held the office of Lord Mayor of London, and died in 1804.—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

April 23, 1779.

I OUGHT not to trouble you so often when you are not well; but that is the very cause of my writing now. You left off abruptly from disorder, and therefore I wish to know it is gone. The plates I hope got home safe. They are pretty, especially the reverses; but the drawing in general is bad.

Pray tell me what you mean by a *priced* catalogue of the pictures at Houghton. Is it a printed one? if it is, where is it to be had? — odd questions from *me*, and which I should not wish to have mentioned as coming from me. I have been told to-day that they are actually sold to the Czarina — *sic transit!* mortifying enough, were not everything transitory! we must recollect that our griefs and pains are so, as well as our joys and glories; and, by balancing the account, a grain of comfort is to be extracted. Adieu! I shall be heartily glad to receive a better account of you.

TO MRS. ABINGTON.¹

[1779.]

MR. WALPOLE cannot express how much he is mortified that he cannot accept of Mrs. Abington's obliging invitation, as he had engaged company to dine with him on Sunday at Strawberry-hill; whom he would put off, if not foreigners who are leaving England. Mr. Walpole hopes, however, that this accident will not prevent an acquaintance, which his admiration of Mrs. Abington's genius has made him long desire; and which he hopes to cultivate at Strawberry-hill, when her leisure will give him leave to trouble her with an invitation.

¹ Now first collected.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington Street, May 21, 1779.

As Mr. Essex has told me that you still continue out of order, I am impatient to hear from yourself how you are. Do send me a line: I hope it will be a satisfactory one.

Do you know that Dr. Ducarel has published a translation of a History of the Abbey of Bec? There is a pretty print to it: and one very curious circumstance, at least valuable to us disciples of Alma Mater Etonensis. The ram-hunting was derived from the manor of Wrotham in Norfolk, which formerly belonged to Bec, and being forfeited, together with other alien priories, was bestowed by Henry VI. on our college. I do not repine at reading any book from which I can learn a single fact that I wish to know. For the lives of the abbots, they were, according to the author, all pinks of piety and holiness—but there are few other facts amusing, especially with regard to the customs of those savage times—excepting that the Empress Matilda was buried in a bull's hide, and afterwards had a tomb covered with silver. There is another new book called "*Sketches from Nature*," in two volumes, by Mr. G. Keate, in which I found one fact too, that, if authentic, is worth knowing. The work is an imitation of Sterne, and has a sort of merit, though nothing that arrives at originality.

For the foundation of the church of Reculver, he quotes a manuscript said to be written by a Dominican friar of Canterbury, and preserved at Louvain. The story is evidently metamorphosed into a novel, and has very little of an antique air; but it affirms that the monkish author attests the beauty of Richard III. This is very absurd, if invention has nothing to do with the story; and therefore one should suppose it genuine. I have desired Dodsley to ask Mr. Keate, if there truly exists such a manuscript: if there does, I own I wish he had printed it rather than his own production; for I agree with Mr. Gray, "that any man living may make a book worth reading, if he will but set down with truth what he has seen or heard, no matter whether the book is well written or not." Let those who can't write, glean.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington Street, May 22, 1779.

If you hear of us no oftener than we of you, you will be as much behindhand in news as my Lady Lyttelton. We have seen a traveller that saw you in your island,¹ but it sounds like hearing of Ulysses. Well! we must be content. You are not only not dethroned, but owe the safety of your dominions to your own skill in fortification. If we do not hear of your extending your conquests, why, is it not less than all our modern heroes have done, whom prophets have foretold and gazettes celebrated—or who have foretold and celebrated themselves. Pray be content to be cooped up in an island that has no neighbours, when the Howes and Clintons and Dunmores and Burgoynes and Campbells are not yet got beyond the great river—Inquiry!² To-day's papers say, that the *little* Prince of Orange³ is to invade you again; but we trust Sir James Wallace has clipped his wings so close, that they will not grow again this season, though he is so ready to *fly*.

Nothing material has happened since I wrote last—so, as every moment of a civil war is precious, every one has been turned to the interest of diversion. There have been three masquerades, an installation, and the ball of the knights at the Haymarket this week; not to mention Almack's festino, Lady Spencer's, Ranelagh and Vauxhall, operas and plays. The Duchess of Bolton too saw masks—so many, that the floor gave way, and the company in the dining-room were near falling on the heads of those in the parlour, and exhibiting all that has not yet appeared in Doctors' Commons. At the knights' ball was such a profusion of strawberries, that people

¹ Mr. Conway was now at his government of Jersey.

² The parliamentary inquiry which took place in the House of Commons on the conduct of the American war.

³ The Prince of Nassau, who had commanded the attack upon Jersey, claiming relationship to the great house of Nassau, Mr. Walpole calls him the "little Prince of Orange." Gibbon, in a letter to Mr. Holroyd, of the 7th, says, "You have heard of the Jersey invasion; everybody praises Arbuthnot's decided spirit. Conway went last night to throw himself into the island."—E.

could hardly get into the supper-room. I could tell you more, but I do not love to exaggerate.

Lady Ailesbury told me this morning that Lord Bristol has got a calf with two feet to each leg — I am convinced it is by the Duchess of Kingston, who has two of every thing where others have but one.¹ Adieu! — I am going to sup with Mrs. Abington — and hope Mrs. Clive will not hear of it.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 2, 1779.

I AM most sincerely rejoiced, dear Sir, that you find yourself at all better, and trust it is an omen of farther amendment. Mr. Essex surprised me by telling me, that you, who keep yourself so warm and so numerously clothed, do yet sometimes, if the sun shines, sit and write in your garden for hours at a time. It is more than I should readily do, whose habitudes are so very different from yours. Your complaints seem to demand perspiration — but I do not venture to advise. I understand no constitution but my own, and should kill Milo, if I managed him as I treat myself. I sat in a window on Saturday, with the east wind blowing on my neck till near two in the morning — and it seems to have done me good, for I am better within these two days than I have been these six months. My spirits have been depressed, and my nerves so aspen, that the smallest noise disturbed me. To-day I do not feel a complaint; which is something at near sixty-two.

I don't know whether I have not misinformed you, nor am sure it was Dr. Ducarel who translated the account of the Abbey of Bec — he gave it to Mr. Lort; but I am not certain he ever published it. You was the first that notified to me the fifth volume of the *Archæologia* — I am not much more edified than usual; but there are three pretty prints of Re-

¹ “Do you know, my lord,” said the Duchess, then Miss Chudleigh, to Lord Chesterfield, “the world says I have had twins!” — “Does it?” said his lordship; “I make a point of believing only one-half of what it says.” — E.

ginal Seals. Mr. Pegge's tedious dissertation, which he calls a brief one, about the foolish legend of St. George, is despicable: all his arguments are equally good for proving the existence of the dragon. What diversion might laughers make of the society! Dolly Pentraeth, the old woman of Mousehole, and Mr. Penneck's nurse, p. 81, would have furnished Foote with two personages for a farce. The same grave dissertation on patriarchal customs seems to have as much to do with British antiquities, as the Lapland witches that sell wind—and pray what business has the society with Roman inscriptions in Dalmatia! I am most pleased with the account of Nonsuch, imperfect as it is: it appears to have been but a villa, and not considerable for a royal one. You see lilacs were then a novelty.—Well, I am glad they publish away. The vanity of figuring in these repositories will make many persons contribute their manuscripts, and every now and then something valuable will come to light, which its own intrinsic merit might not have saved.

I know nothing more of Houghton. I should certainly be glad to have the priced catalogue; and if you will lend me yours, my printer shall transcribe it—but I am in no hurry. I conceive faint hopes, as the sale is not concluded: however, I take care not to flatter myself.

I think I told you I had purchased, at Mr. Ives's sale, a handsome coat in painted glass, of Hobart impaling Boleyn—but I can find no such match in my pedigree—yet I have heard that Blickling belonged to Ann Boleyn's father. Pray reconcile all this to me.

Lord de Ferrers is to dine here on Saturday; and I have got to treat him with an account of ancient painting, formerly in the hall of Tamworth Castle; they are mentioned in War-ton's Observations on the Fairy Queen, vol. i. p. 43.

Do not put yourself to pain to answer this—only be assured I shall be happy to know when you are able to write with ease. You must leave your cloister, if your transcribing leaves you. Believe me, dear Sir,

Ever most truly.

TO THE REV. DR. LORT.

Strawberry Hill, June 4, 1779.

I AM sorry, dear Sir, you could not let me have the pleasure of your company; but, I own, you have partly, not entirely, made me amends by the sight of your curious manuscript, which I return you, with your other book of inaugurations.

The sight of the manuscript was particularly welcome to me, because the long visit of Henry VI. and his uncle Gloucester, to St. Edmund's Bury, accounts for those rare altar tablets that I bought at Mr. Ives's sale, on which are incontestably the portraits of Duke Humphrey, Cardinal Beaufort, and the same archbishop that is in my Marriage of Henry VI. I know the house of Lancaster were patrons of St. Edmund's Bury; but so long a visit is demonstration.

The fourth person on my pannels is unknown. Over his head is a coat of arms. It may be that of W. Curteys the abbot, or the alderman, as he is in scarlet. His figure and the Duke's are far superior to the other two, and worthy of a good Italian master. The Cardinal and the Archbishop are in the dry hard manner of the age. I wish you would call and look at them; they are at Mr. Bonus's in Oxford-road; the two prelates are much damaged. I peremptorily enjoined Bonus to repair only, and not repaint them; and thus, by putting him out of his way, I have put him so much out of humour too, that he has kept them these two years, and not finished them yet. I design them for the four void spaces in my chapel, on the sides of the shrine. The Duke of Gloucester's face is so like, though younger, that it proves I guessed right at his figure in my Marriage. The tablets came out of the abbey of Bury; were procured by old Peter Le Neve, Norroy; and came by his widow's marriage to Tom Martin, at whose sale Mr. Ives bought them. We have very few princely portraits so ancient, so authentic, and none so well painted as the Duke and fourth person. These were the insides of the doors, which I had split into two, and value them extremely.

This account I think will be more satisfactory to you than notes.

Pray tell me how you like the pictures when you have examined them. I shall search in Edmondson's new Vocabulary of Arms for the coat, which contains three bulls' heads on six pieces; but the colours are either white and black, or the latter is become so by time. I hope you are not going out of town yet; I shall probably be there some day in next week.

I see advertized a book something in the way of your inaugurations, called *Le Costume*; do you know anything of it? Can you tell me who is the author of the *Second Anticipation* on the Exhibition? Is not it Barry the painter?

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday, June 5, 1779.

I WRITE to you more seldom than I am disposed to do, from having nothing positive to tell you, and from being unwilling to say and unsay every minute something that is reported positively. The confident assertions of the victory over D'Estaing are totally vanished — and they who invented them, now declaim as bitterly against Byron, as if he had deceived them — and as they did against Keppel. This day se'nnight there was a great alarm about Ireland — which was far from being all invention, though not an absolute insurrection, as was said. The case, I believe, was this: — The court, in order to break the volunteer army established by the Irish themselves, endeavoured to persuade a body in Lady Blayney's county of Monaghan to enlist in the militia — which they took indignantly. They said, they had great regard for Lady Blayney and Lord Clermont; but to act under them, would be acting under the King, and that was by no means their intention. There have since been motions for inquiries what steps the ministers have taken to satisfy the Irish — and these they have imprudently rejected — which will not tend to pacification. The ministers have been pushed too on the article of Spain, and could not deny that all negotiation is at

an end — though they will not own farther. However, the Spanish ambassador is much out of humour. From Paris they write confidently of the approaching declaration;¹ and Lord Sandwich, I hear, has said in a very mixed company, that it was folly not to expect it. There is another million asked, and given on a vote of credit; and Lord North has boasted of such mines for next year, that one would think he believed next year would never come.

The Inquiry² goes on, and Lord Harrington did himself and Burgoyne honour. Barré and Governor Johnstone have had warm words,³ and Burke has been as frantic for the Roman Catholics as Lord George Gordon against them. The Parliament, it is said, is to rise on the 21st.

You will not collect from all this that our prospect clears up. I fear there is not more discretion in the treatment of Ireland than of America. The court seems to be infatuated, and to think that nothing is of any consequence but a majority in Parliament — though they have totally lost all power but that of provoking. Fortunate it had been for the King and kingdom, had the court had no majority for these six years! America had still been ours! — and all the lives and all the millions we have squandered! A majority that has lost thirteen provinces by bullying and vapouring, and the most childish menaces, will be a brave countermatch for France and Spain, and a rebellion in Ireland! In short, it is plain that there is nothing a majority in Parliament can do, but outvote a minority; and yet by their own accounts one would think they could not do even that. I saw a paper t'other day that began with this Iriseism, "As the minority have lost us thirteen provinces," &c. I know nothing the minority have done, or been suffered to do, but restore the Roman Catholic religion — and that too was by the desire of the court.

¹ On the breaking out of the war between this country and America, Spain had offered to mediate between them; but, receiving a refusal, she at once declared herself a principal in the war, and ready to fulfil the terms of the family compact.—E.

² The Inquiry into the Conduct of the American war.

³ In the course of a debate in the House of Commons, on the 3rd of June, Governor Johnstone told Colonel Barré, that he was making a

This is however the present style. They announced with infinite applause a new production of Tickell:—it has appeared, and is a most paltry performance. It is called the *Cassette Verte* of M. de Sartine, and pretends to be his correspondence with the opposition. Nay, they are so pitifully mean as to laugh at Doctor Franklin, who has such thorough reason to sit and laugh at them. What triumph it must be to him to see a miserable pamphlet all the revenge they can take! There is another, still duller, called *Opposition Mornings*, in which you are lugged in. In truth, it is a compliment to any man to except him out of the number of those that have contributed to the shocking disgraces inflicted on this undone country! When Lord Chatham was minister, he never replied to abuse but by a victory.

I know no private news: I have been here ever since Tuesday, enjoying my tranquillity, as much as an honest man can do who sees his country ruined. It is just such a period as makes philosophy wisdom. There are great moments when every man is called on to exert himself—but when folly, infatuation, delusion, incapacity, and profligacy fling a nation away, and it concurs itself, and applauds its destroyers, a man who has lent no hand to the mischief, and can neither prevent nor remedy the mass of evils, is fully justified in sitting aloof and beholding the tempest rage, with silent scorn and indignant compassion. Nay, I have, I own, some comfortable reflections. I rejoice that there is still a great continent of Englishmen who will remain free and independent, and who laugh at the impotent majorities of a prostitute Parliament. I care not whether General Burgoyne and Governor Johnstone cross over and figure in, and support or oppose; nor whether Mr. Burke, or the superior of the Jesuits, is high commissioner to the kirk of Scotland. My ideas are such as I have always had, and are too plain and simple to comprehend modern confusions; and, therefore, they suit with those of few men. What will be the issue of this chaos, I know not, and, probably, shall not see. I do see with satisfaction, *that what was*

scaramouch of himself. The Colonel got up to demand an explanation, but the Speaker put an end to the altercation.—E.

meditated has failed by the grossest folly; and when one has escaped the worst, lesser evils must be endured with patience.

After this dull effusion, I will divert you with a story that made me laugh this morning till I cried. You know my Swiss David, and his incomprehensible pronunciation. He came to me, and said, "Auh! dar is Meses Ellis wants some of your large flags to put in her great O." With much ado, I found out that Mrs. Ellis had sent for leave to take up some flags out of my meadow for her grotto.

I hope in a few days to see Lady Ailesbury and Miss Jennings here; I have writ to propose it. What are your intentions? Do you stay till you have made your island impregnable? I doubt it will be our only one that will be so.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 16, 1779.

YOUR Countess was here last Thursday, and received a letter from you, that told us how slowly you receive ours. When you will receive this I cannot guess; but it dates a new era, which you with reason did not care to look at as possible. In a word, behold a Spanish war! I must detail a little to increase your wonder. I heard here the day before yesterday that it was likely; and that night received a letter from Paris, telling me (it was of the 6th) that Monsieur de Beauveau was going, they knew not whither, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, with three lieutenant-generals and six or eight *maréchaux de camp* under him. Yesterday I went to town, and Thomas Walpole happened to call on me. He, who used to be informed early, did not believe a word either of a Spanish war or a French expedition. I saw some other persons in the evening as ignorant. At night I went to sup at Richmond-house. The Duke said the Brest fleet was certainly sailed, and had got the start of ours by twelve days; that Monsieur de Beauveau was on board with a large sum of money, and with white and *red* cockades; and that there would certainly be a Spanish war.

He added, that the Opposition were then pressing in the House of Commons to have the Parliament continue sitting, and urging to know if we were not at the eve of a Spanish war; but the ministers persisted in the prorogation for to-morrow or Friday, and would not answer on Spain.

I said I would make you wonder — But no — Why should the Parliament continue to sit? Are not the ministers and the Parliament the same thing? And how has either House shown that it has any talent for war?

The Duke of Richmond does not guess whither the Brest fleet is gone. He thinks, if to Ireland, we should have known it by this time. He has heard that the Prince of Beauveau has said he was going on an expedition that would be glorious in the eyes of posterity. I asked, if that might not mean Gibraltar? The Duke doubts, but hopes it, as he thinks it no wise measure on their side; yet he was very melancholy, as you will be, on this heavy accession to our distresses.

Well! here we are, *aris et focis* and all at stake! What can we be meaning? Unable to conquer America before she was assisted — scarce able to keep France at bay — are we a match for both, and Spain too? What can be our view? nay, what can be our expectation? I sometimes think we reckon it will be more creditable to be forced by France and Spain to give up America, than to have the merit with the latter of doing it with grace.—But, as Cato says,

“ I ’m weary of conjectures — this must end them ; ”

that is, the sword:—and never, I believe, did a country plunge itself into such difficulties step by step, and for six years together, without once recollecting that each foreign war rendered the object of the civil war more unattainable; and that in both the foreign wars we have not an object in prospect. Unable to recruit our remnant of an army in America, are we to make conquests on France and Spain? They may choose their attacks: we can scarce choose what we will defend.

Ireland, they say, is more temperate than was expected. That is some consolation — yet many fear the Irish will be tempted to unite with America, which would throw all that trade into their convenient harbours: and I own I have apprehensions that the Parliament's rising without taking a step in their favour may offend them. Surely at least we have courageous ministers. I thought my father a stout man: — he had not a tithe of their spirit.

The town has wound up the season perfectly in character by a fête at the Pantheon by subscription. Le Texier managed it; but it turned out sadly. The company was first shut into the galleries to look down on the supper, then let to descend to it. Afterwards they were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould, and planted with trees, and crammed with nosegays: but the fresh earth, and the dead leaves, and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture, that they were suffocated; and when they remounted, the legs and wings of chickens and remnants of ham (for the supper was not removed) poisoned them more. A druid in an arbour distributed verses to the ladies; then the Baccelli¹ and the dancers of the Opera danced; and then danced the company; and then it being morning, and the candles burnt out, the windows were opened; and then the stewed-danced assembly were such shocking figures, that they fled like ghosts as they looked. — I suppose there will be no more balls unless the French land, and then we shall show we do not mind it.

Thus I have told you all I know. You will ponder over these things in your little distant island, when we have forgotten them. There is another person, one Doctor Franklin, who, I fancy, is not sorry that we divert ourselves so well.

Yours ever.

¹ After the departure of Mademoiselle Heinel, no dancing so much delighted the frequenters of the Opera as that of Mademoiselle Baccelli and M. Vestris le jeune.—E.

TO THE HON. GEORGE HARDINGE.¹

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1779.

I HAVE NOW received the drawings of Grignan, and know not how to express my satisfaction and gratitude but by a silly witticism that is like the studied quaintness of the last age. In short, they are so much more beautiful than I expected, that I am *not* surprised at *your* having surprised me by exceeding even what I expected from your well-known kindness to me; they are charmingly executed, and with great taste. I own too that Grignan is grander, and in a much finer situation, than I had imagined; as I concluded that the witchery of Madame de Sévigné's ideas and style had spread the same leaf-gold over *places* with which she gilded her *friends*. All that has appeared of *them* since the publication of her letters has lowered them. A single letter of her daughter, that to Paulina, with a description of the Duchess of Bourbon's toilette, is worthy of the mother. Paulina's own letters contain not a little worth reading; one just divines that she might have written well if she had had anything to write about (which, however, would not have signified to her grandmother). Coulanges was a silly good-humoured glutton, that flattered a rich widow for her dinners. His wife was sensible, but dry, and rather peevish at growing old. Unluckily nothing more has come to light of Madame de Sévigné's son, whose short letters in the collection I am almost *profane* enough to prefer to his mother's; and which makes me astonished that she did not love his wit, so unaffected, and so congenial to her own, in preference to the eccentric and sophisticated reveries of her sublime and ill-humoured daughter. Grignan alone maintains its dignity,

¹ Son of Nicholas Hardinge, Esq. one of the joint secretaries of the treasury, and member for the borough of Eye. He was educated at Eton school, and finished his studies at Trinity College, Cambridge, where Dr. Watson was his tutor. He was called to the bar in 1769, and was subsequently appointed solicitor-general to the Queen. In 1787, he was made a Welsh judge, and died in 1816. In 1818, the works of this clever and eccentric scholar were published, with an account of his life, by Mr. John Nichols.—E.

and shall be consecrated here among other monuments of that bewitching period, and amongst which one loves to lose oneself, and drink oblivion of an era so very unlike; for the awkward bigots to despotism of our time have not Madame de Sévigné's address, nor can paint an Indian idol with an hundred hands as graceful as the Apollo of the Belvidere. When will you come and accept my thanks? will Wednesday next suit you? But do you know that I must ask you not to leave your gown behind you, which indeed I never knew you put on willingly, but to come in it. I shall want your protection at Westminster Hall. Yours most cordially.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Saturday night, July 10, 1779.

I COULD not thank your ladyship before the post went out to-day, as I was getting into my chaise to go and dine at Carshalton with my cousin Thomas Walpole when I received your kind inquiry about my eye. It is quite well again, and I hope the next attack of the gout will be anywhere rather than in that quarter.

I did not expect Mr. Conway would think of returning just now. As you have lost both Mrs. Damer and Lady William Campbell, I do not see why your ladyship should not go to Goodwood.

The Baroness's increasing peevishness does not surprise me. When people will not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles. She knows nothing of politics, and no wonder talks nonsense about them. It is silly to wish three nations had but one neck; but it is ten times more absurd to act as if it was so, which the government has done;—ay, and forgetting, too, that it has not a scimitar large enough to sever that neck, which they have in effect made *one*. It is past the time, Madam, of making conjectures. How can one guess whither France and Spain will direct a blow that is in their option? I am rather inclined to think that they will have patience to ruin us in detail.

Hitherto France and America have carried their points by that manœuvre. Should there be an engagement at sea, and the French and Spanish fleets, by their great superiority, have the advantage, one knows not what might happen. Yet, though there are such large preparations making on the French coast, I do not much expect a serious invasion, as they are sure they can do us more damage by a variety of other attacks, where we can make little resistance. Gibraltar and Jamaica can but be the immediate objects of Spain. Ireland is much worse guarded than this island:—nay, we must be undone by our expense, should the summer pass without any attempt. My cousin thinks they will try to destroy Portsmouth and Plymouth—but I have seen nothing in the present French ministry that looks like bold enterprise. We are much more adventurous, that set everything to the hazard: but there are such numbers of *baronesses* that both talk and act with passion, that one would think the nation had lost its senses. Everything has miscarried that has been undertaken, and the worse we succeed, the more is risked;—yet the nation is not angry! How can one conjecture during such a delirium? I sometimes almost think I must be in the wrong to be of so contrary an opinion to most men—yet, when every misfortune that has happened had been foretold by a few, why should I not think I have been in the right? Has not almost every single event that has been announced as prosperous proved a gross falsehood, and often a silly one? Are we not at this moment assured that Washington cannot possibly amass an army of above 8000 men! and yet Clinton, with 20,000 men, and with the hearts, as we are told, too, of three parts of the colonies, dares not show his teeth without the walls of New York? Can I be in the wrong in not believing what is so contradictory to my senses? We could not conquer America when it stood alone; then France supported it, and we did not mend the matter. To make it still easier, we have driven Spain into the alliance. Is this wisdom? Would it be presumption, even if one were single, to think that we must have the worst in such a contest? Shall I be like the mob, and expect to conquer France and Spain,

and then thunder upon America? Nay, but the higher mob do not expect such success. They would not be so angry at the house of Bourbon, if not morally certain that those kings destroy all our passionate desire and expectation of conquering America. We bullied, and threatened, and begged, and nothing would do. Yet independence was still the word. Now we rail at the two monarchs—and when they have banged us, we shall sue to them as humbly as we did to the Congress. All this my senses, such as they are, tell me has been and will be the case. What is worse, all Europe is of the same opinion; and though forty thousand *baronesses* may be ever so angry, I venture to prophesy that we shall make but a very foolish figure whenever we are so lucky as to obtain a peace; and posterity, that may have prejudices of its own, will still take the liberty to pronounce, that its ancestors were a woful set of politicians from the year 1774 to — I wish I knew when.

If I might advise, I would recommend Mr. Burrell to command the fleet in the room of Sir Charles Hardy. The fortune of the Burrells is powerful enough to baffle calculation. Good night, Madam!

P. S. I have not written to Mr. Conway since this day sevensnight, not having a teaspoonful of news to send him. I will beg your ladyship to tell him so.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1779.

I AM concerned, dear Sir, that you gave yourself the trouble of transcribing the catalogue and prices, which I received last night, and for which I am exceedingly obliged to you. Partial as I am to the pictures at Houghton, I confess I think them much overvalued. My father's whole collection, of which alone he had preserved the prices, cost but 40,000*l.*; and after his death there were three sales of pictures, among which were all the whole-lengths of Vandyke but three, which had been sent to Houghton, but not fitting any of the spaces

left, came back to town. Few of the rest sold were very fine, but no doubt Sir Robert had paid as dear for many of them; as purchasers are not perfect connoisseurs at first.

Many of the valuations are not only exorbitant, but injudicious. They who made the estimate seem to have considered the rarity of the hands more than the excellence. Three—The Magi's Offering, by Carlo Maratti, as it is called, and two, supposed Paul Veronese,—are very indifferent copies, and yet all are roundly valued, and the first ridiculously. I do not doubt of another picture in the collection but the Last Supper, by Raphael, and yet this is set down at 500*l*. I miss three pictures, at least they are not set down, the Sir Thomas Wharton, and Laud and Gibbons. The first is most capital; yes, I recollect I have had some doubts on the Laud, though the University of Oxford once offered 400*l*. for it—and if Queen Henrietta is by Vandyke, it is a very indifferent one. The affixing a higher value to the Pietro Cortona than to the octagon Guido is most absurd—I have often gazed on the latter, and preferred it even to the Doctor's. In short, the appraisers were determined to see what the Czarina *could* give, rather than what the pictures were really worth—I am glad she seems to think so, for I hear no more of the sale—it is not very wise in me still to concern myself, at my age, about what I have so little interest in—it is still less wise to be anxious on trifles, when one's country is sinking. I do not know which is most mad, my nephew or our ministers—both the one and the other increase my veneration for the founder of Houghton!

I will not rob you of the prints you mention, dear Sir; one of them at least I know Mr. Pennant gave me. I do not admire him for his punctiliousness with you. Pray tell me the name of your glass-painter; I do not think I shall want him, but it is not impossible. Mr. Essex agreed with me, that Jarvis's windows for Oxford, after Sir Joshua Reynolds, will not succeed. Most of his colours are opaque, and their great beauty depending on a spot of light for sun or moon, is an imposition. When his paintings are exhibited at Charing-cross, all the rest of the room is darkened to relieve them. That

cannot be done at New College; or if done, the chapel would be too dark. If there are other lights, the effect will be lost.

This sultry weather will, I hope, quite restore you; people need not go to Lisbon and Naples, if we continue to have such summers. Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, August 12, 1779.

I WRITE from decency, dear Sir, not from having anything particular to say, but to thank you for your offer of letting me see the arms of painted glass; which, however, I will decline, lest it should be broken, and as at present I have no occasion to employ the painter. If I build my offices, perhaps I may have; but I have dropped that thought for this year. The disastrous times do not inspire expense. Our alarms, I conclude, do not ruffle your hermitage. We are returning to our state of islandhood, and shall have little, I believe, to boast but of what we have been.

I see a History of Alien Priories announced;¹ do you know anything of it, or of the author? I am ever yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, 1779.

I AM not at all surprised, my dear Madam, at the intrepidity of Mrs. Damer;² she always was the heroic daughter of a hero. Her sense and coolness never forsake her. I, who am not so firm, shuddered at your ladyship's account. Now that she has stood fire for four hours, I hope she will give as clear proofs of her understanding, of which I have

¹ This was Mr. Gough's well-known work, entitled "Some Account of the Alien Priories, and of such Lands as they are known to have possessed in England and Wales," in two volumes octavo.—E.

² The packet in which she was crossing from Dover to Ostend was taken by a French frigate, after a running fight of several hours.

as high opinion as of her courage, and not return in any danger.

I am to dine at Ditton to-morrow, and will certainly talk on the subject you recommend; yet I am far, till I have heard more, from thinking with your ladyship, that more troops and artillery at Jersey would be desirable. Any considerable quantity of either, especially of the former, cannot be spared at this moment, when so big a cloud hangs over this island, nor would any number avail if the French should be masters at sea. A large garrison would but tempt the French thither, were it but to distress this country; and, what is worse, would encourage Mr. Conway to make an impracticable defence. If he is to remain in a situation so unworthy of him, I confess I had rather he was totally incapable of making any defence. I love him enough not to murmur at his exposing himself where his country and his honour demand him; but I would not have him measure himself in a place untenable against very superior force. My present comfort is, as to him, that France at this moment has a far vaster object. I have good reason to believe the government knows that a great army is ready to embark at St. Maloes, but will not stir till after a sea-fight, which we do not know but may be engaged at this moment. Our fleet is allowed to be the finest ever set forth by this country; but it is inferior in number by seventeen ships to the united squadron of the Bourbons. France, if successful, means to pour in a vast many thousands on us, and has threatened to burn the capital itself. Jersey, my dear Madam, does not enter into a calculation of such magnitude. The moment is singularly awful; yet the vaunts of enemies are rarely executed successfully and ably. Have we trampled America under our foot?

You have too good sense, Madam, to be imposed upon by my arguments, if they are insubstantial. You do know that I have had my terrors for Mr. Conway; but at present they are out of the question, from the insignificance of his island. Do not listen to rumours, nor believe a single one till it has been canvassed over and over. Fear, folly, fifty motives, will coin new reports every hour at such a conjuncture. When one is

totally void of credit and power, patience is the only wisdom. I have seen dangers still more imminent. They were dispersed. Nothing happens in proportion to what is meditated. Fortune, whatever fortune is, is more constant than is the common notion. I do not give this as one of my solid arguments, but I have always encouraged myself in being superstitious on the favourable side. I never, like most superstitious people, believe auguries against my wishes. We have been fortunate in the escape of Mrs. Damer, and in the defeat at Jersey even before Mr. Conway arrived; and thence I depend on the same future prosperity. From the authority of persons who do not reason on such airy hopes, I am seriously persuaded, that if the fleets engage, the enemy will not gain advantage without deep-felt loss, enough probably to dismay their invasion. Coolness may succeed, and then negotiation. Surely, if we can weather the summer, we shall, obstinate as we are against conviction, be compelled by the want of money to relinquish our ridiculous pretensions, now proved to be utterly impracticable; for, with an inferior navy at home, can we assert sovereignty over America? It is a contradiction in terms and in fact. It may be hard of digestion to relinquish it, but it is impossible to pursue it. Adieu, my dear Madam! I have not left room for a line more.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 13, 1779.

I AM writing to you at random; not knowing whether or when this letter will go: but your brother told me last night that an officer, whose name I have forgot, was arrived from Jersey, and would return to you soon. I am sensible how very seldom I have written to you — but you have been few moments out of my thoughts. What *they* have been, you who know me so minutely may well guess, and why they do not pass my lips. Sense, experience, circumstances, can teach one to command one's self outwardly, but do not divest a most friendly heart of its feelings. I believe the state of my mind

has contributed to bring on a very weak and decaying body my present disorders. I have not been well the whole summer; but for these three weeks much otherwise. It has at last ended in the gout, which to all appearance will be a short fit.

On public affairs I cannot speak. Everything is so exaggerated on all sides, that what grains of truth remain in the sieve would appear cold and insipid; and the great manœuvres you learn as soon as I. In the naval battle between Byron and D'Estaing, our captains were worthy of any age in our story.

You may imagine how happy I am at Mrs. Damer's return, and at her not being at Naples, as she was likely to have been, at the dreadful explosion of Vesuvius.¹ Surely it will have glutted Sir William's rage for volcanos! How poor Lady Hamilton's nerves stood it I do not conceive. Oh, mankind! mankind! Are there not calamities enough in store for us, but must destruction be our amusement and pursuit?

I send this to Ditton,² where it may wait some days; but I would not suffer a sure opportunity to slip without a line. You are more obliged to me for all I do not say, than for whatever eloquence itself could pen.

P. S. I unseal my letter to add, that undoubtedly you will come to the meeting of Parliament, which will be in October. Nothing can or ever did make me advise you to take a step unworthy of yourself. But surely you have higher and more sacred duties than the government of a mole-hill!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 16, 1779.

You ought not to accuse yourself only, when I have been as silent as you. Surely we have been friends too long to

¹ On the 10th of August; when the eruption was so great, that several villages were destroyed: a hunting seat belonging to the King of Naples, called *Caccia Bella*, shared the like fate.—E.

² Where Lord Hertford had then a villa.

admit ceremony as a go-between. I have thought of writing to you several times, but found I had nothing worth telling you. I am rejoiced to hear your health has been better: mine has been worse the whole summer and autumn than ever it was without any positive distemper, and thence I conclude it is a failure in my constitution — of which, being a thing of course, we will say no more — nobody but a physician is bound to hear what he cannot cure — and if we will pay for what we cannot expect, it is our own fault.

I have seen Doctor Lort, who seems pleased with becoming a limb of Canterbury. I heartily wish the mitre may not devolve before it has beamed substantially on him. In the mean time he will be delighted with ransacking the library at Lambeth; and, to do him justice, his ardour is literary, not interested.

I am much obliged to you, dear Sir, for taking the trouble of transcribing Mr. Tyson's Journal, which is entertaining. But I am so ignorant as not to know where Hatfield Priory is. The three heads I remember on the gate at Whitehall; there were five more. The whole demolished structure was transported to the great park at Windsor by the late Duke of Cumberland, who intended to re-edify it, but never did; and now I suppose

Its ruins ruined, as its place no more.

I did not know what was become of the heads, and am glad any are preserved. I should doubt their being the works of Torregiano. Pray who is Mr. Nichols, who has published the *Alien Priories*; there are half a dozen or more pretty views of French cathedrals. I cannot say that I found anything else in the book that amused me — but as you deal more in ancient lore than I do, perhaps you might be better pleased.

I am told there is a new *History of Gloucestershire*, very large, but ill executed, by one Rudder¹ — still I have sent for it, for Gloucestershire is a very historic country.

¹ “The History and Antiquities of Gloucestershire; comprising the Topography, Antiquities, Curiosities, Produce, Trade, and Manufactures of that County:” by Samuel Rudder, printer, Cirencester, folio.—E.

It was a wrong scent on which I employed you. The arms I have impaled were certainly not Boleyn's. You lament removal of friends — alas ! dear Sir, when one lives to our age, one feels that in a higher degree than from their change of place ! but one must not dilate those common moralities. You see by my date I have changed place myself. I am got into an excellent, comfortable, cheerful house ; and as, from necessity and inclination, I live much more at home than I used to do, it is very agreeable to be so pleasantly lodged, and to be in a warm inn as one passes through the last vale. Adieu ! Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 27, 1779.

I HAVE two good reasons against writing,—nothing to say, and a lame muffled hand ; and therefore I choose to write to you, for it shows remembrance. For these six weeks almost I have been a prisoner with the gout, but begin to creep about my room. How have you borne the late deluge and the present frost ? How do you like an earl-bishop ?¹ Had

¹ The Hon. and Rev. Frederick Hervey, bishop of Derry, had just succeeded to the earldom of Bristol, as fifth Earl, by the death of his brother. Hardy, in his *Memoirs of Lord Charlemont*, gives the following account of this singular man :—" His family was famous for talents, equally so for eccentricity ; and the eccentricity of the whole race shone out, and seemed to be concentrated in him. In one respect, he was not unlike Villiers Duke of Buckingham, ' every thing by starts, and nothing long ! ' Generous, but uncertain ; splendid, but fantastical ; an admirer of the fine arts, without any just selection ; engaging, often licentious in conversation ; extremely polite, extremely violent. His distribution of church livings, chiefly, as I have been informed, among the older and respectable clergy in his own diocese, must always be mentioned with that warm approbation which it is justly entitled to. His progress from his diocese to the metropolis, and his entrance into it, were perfectly correspondent to the rest of his conduct. Through every town on the road, he seemed to court and was received with all warlike honours ; and I remember seeing him pass by the Parliament-house in Dublin (Lords and Commons were then both sitting), escorted by a body of dragoons, full of spirits and talk, apparently enjoying the eager gaze of the surrounding multitude, and displaying altogether the self-complacency of a favourite marshal of France on his way to Versailles, rather than the grave deportment of a prelate of the church of England." He died in 1803.—E.

not we one before in ancient days? I have not a book in town; but was not there Anthony Beck, or a Hubert de Burgh, that was Bishop of Durham and Earl of Kent, or have I confounded them?

Have you seen Rudder's new History of Gloucestershire? His additions to Sir Robert Atkyns make it the most sensible history of a county that we have had yet; for his descriptions of the scite, soil, products, and prospects of each parish are extremely good and picturesque; and he treats fanciful prejudices, and Saxon etymologies, when unfounded, and traditions, with due contempt.

I will not spin this note any further, but shall be glad of a line to tell me you are well. I have not seen Mr. Lort since he roosted under the metropolitan wings of his grace of Lambeth. Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 5, 1780.

WHEN you said that you feared that your particular account of your very providential escape would deter me from writing to you again, I am sure, dear Sir, that you spoke only from modesty, and not from thinking me capable of being so criminally indifferent to anything, much less under such danger as you have run, that regards so old a friend, and one to whom I owe so many obligations. I am but too apt to write letters on trifling or no occasions; and should certainly have told you the interest I take in your accident, and how happy I am that it had no consequences of any sort. It is hard that temperance itself, which you are, should be punished for a good-natured transgression of your own rules, and where the excess was only staying out beyond your usual hour. I am heartily glad you did not jump out of your chaise; it has often been a much worse precaution than any consequences from risking to remain in it; as you are lame too, might have been very fatal. Thank God! all ended so well. Mr. Masters seems to have been more

frightened, with not greater reason. What an absurd man to be impatient to notify a disagreeable event to you, and in so boisterous a manner, and which he could not know was true, since it was not !

I shall take extremely kind your sending me your picture in glass. I have carefully preserved the slight outline of yourself in a gown and night-cap, which you once was so good as to give me, because there was some likeness to your features, though it is too old even now. For a portrait of me in return, you might have it by sending the painter to the anatomical school, and bidding him draw the first skeleton he sees. I should expect any limner would laugh in my face if I offered it to him to be copied.

I thought I had confounded the ancient count-bishops, as I had, and you have set me right. The new temporal-ecclesiastical peer's estate is more than twelve thousand a year, though I can scarce believe it is eighteen, as the last lord said.

The picture found near the altar in Westminster-abbey, about three years ago, was of King Sebert; I saw it, and it was well preserved, with some others worse — but they have foolishly buried it again behind their new altar-piece; and so they have a very fine tomb of Ann of Cleve, close to the altar, which they did not know till I told them whose it was, though her arms are upon it, and though there is an exact plate of it in Sandford. They might at least have cut out the portraits and removed the tomb to a conspicuous situation; but though this age is grown so antiquarian, it has not gained a grain more of sense in that walk—witness as you instance in Mr. Grose's Legends, and in the dean and chapter reburying the crown, robes, and sceptre of Edward I.—there would surely have been as much piety in preserving them in their treasury, as in consigning them again to decay. I did not know that the salvation of robes and crowns depended on receiving Christian burial. At the same time, the chapter transgress that prince's will, like all their antecessors; for he ordered his tomb to be opened every year or two years, and receive a new cere-cloth or pall; but they boast now

of having enclosed him so substantially, that his ashes cannot be violated again.

It was the present Bishop Dean who showed me the pictures and Ann's tomb, and consulted me on the new altarpiece.—I advised him to have a light octangular canopy, like the cross at Chichester, placed over the table or altar itself, which would have given dignity to it, especially if elevated by a flight of steps; and from the side arches of the octagon, I would have had a semicircle of open arches that should have advanced quite to the seats of the prebends, which would have discovered the pictures; and through the octagon itself you would have perceived the shrine of Edward the Confessor, which is much higher than the level of the choir—but men who ask advice seldom follow it, if you do not happen to light on the same ideas with themselves.

P. S. The Houghton pictures are not lost—but to Houghton and England!¹

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.²

Berkeley Square, January 25, 1780.

It was but yesterday, Sir, that I received the favour of your letter, and this morning I sent, according to your permission, to Mr. Sheridan the elder, to desire the manuscript of your tragedy;³ for as I am but just recovering of a fit of

¹ They had been sold to the Empress of Russia in the preceding September, and immediately transferred to that country.—E.

² Now first published.

³ Mr. Jephson's tragedy of *The Count of Narbonne*, founded on Walpole's Gothic story of the *Castle of Otranto*. It will be seen, that it was brought out, in the following year, with considerable success, at Covent Garden theatre. "On Friday evening," says Hannah More, in a letter to one of her sisters, "I went to Mr. Tighe's to hear him read Jephson's tragedy. 'Praise,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is a tribute which every man is expected to pay for the grant of perusing a manuscript;' and indeed I could praise without hurting my conscience, for *The Count of Narbonne* has considerable merit; the language is very poetical, and parts of the fable very interesting; the plot managed with art, and the characters well drawn. The love scenes I think are the worst: they are prettily written, and full of flowers, but are rather cold; they have more poetry than passion. I do not mean to detract from Mr. Jephson's merit by this remark; for it does not lessen a poet's fame, to say he excels more in painting the terrible, than the tender passions."—*Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 206.—E.

the gout, which I had severely for above two months, I was not able to bear the fatigue of company at home; nor could I have had the pleasure of attending to the piece so much as I wished to do, if I had invited ladies to hear it, to whom I must have been doing the honours.

I have read your play once, Sir, rapidly, though alone, and therefore cannot yet be very particular on the details; but I can say already, with great truth, that you have made a great deal more than I thought possible out of the skeleton of a story; and have arranged it so artfully, that unless I am deceived by being too familiar with it, it will be very intelligible to the audience, even if they have not read the original fable; and you have had the address to make it coherent, without the marvellous, though so much depended on that part. In short, you have put my extravagant materials in an alembic, and drawn off only what was rational.

Your diction is very beautiful, often poetic, and yet what I admire, very simple and natural; and when necessary, rapid, concise, and sublime.

If I did not distrust my own self-love, I should say that I think it must be a very interesting piece: and yet I might say so without vanity, so much of the disposition of the scenes is your own. I do not yet know, Sir, what alterations you propose to make; nor do I perceive where the second and fourth acts want amendment. The first in your manuscript is imperfect. If I wished for any correction, it would be to shorten the scene in the fourth act between the Countess, Adelaide, and Austin, which rather delays the impatience of the audience for the catastrophe, and does not contribute to it, but by the mother's orders to the daughter at the end of the scene to repair to the great church. In the last scene I should wish to have Theodore fall into a transport of rage and despair immediately on the death of Adelaide, and be carried off by Austin's orders; for I doubt the interval is too long for him to faint after Narbonne's speech. The fainting fit, I think, might be better applied to the Countess; it does not seem requisite that she should die, but the audience might be left in suspense about her.

My last observations will be very trifling indeed, Sir; but I think you use *nobleness*, *niceness*, &c. too often, which I doubt are not classic terminations for *nobility*, *nicety*, &c. though I allow that nobility will not always express nobleness. My *children's timeless deaths* can scarce be said for *untimely*; nor should I choose to employ *children's* as a plural genitive case, which I think the *s* at the end cannot imply. "Hearted preference" is very bold for preference taken to heart. Raymond in the last scene says —

"Show me thy wound — oh, hell! 'tis through her heart!"

This line is quite unnecessary, and infers an obedience in displaying her wound which would be shocking; besides, as there is often a buffoon in an audience at a new tragedy, it might be received dangerously. The word "Jehovah" will certainly not be suffered on the stage.

In casting the parts I conclude Mrs. Yates, as women never cease to like acting young parts, would prefer that of Adelaide, though the Countess is more suitable to her age; and it is foolish to see her representing the daughter of women fifteen or twenty years younger. As my bad health seldom allows my going to the theatre, I never saw Mr. Henderson but once. His person and style should recommend him to the parts of Raymond or Austin. Smith, I suppose, would expect to be Theodore; but Lewis is younger, handsomer, and, I think, a better actor; but you are in the right, Sir, in having no favourable idea of our stage at present.

I am sorry, Sir, that neither my talents nor health allow me to offer to supply you with Prologue and Epilogue. Poetry never was my natural turn; and what little propensity I had to it, is totally extinguished by age and pain. It is honour enough to me to have furnished the canons of your tragedy; I should disgrace it by attempting to supply adventitious ornaments. The clumsiness of the seams would betray my gouty fingers.

I shall take the liberty of reading your play once more before I return it. It will be extraordinary indeed if it is not accepted, but I cannot doubt but it will be, and very success-

ful; though it will be great pity but you should have some zealous friend to attend to it, and who is able to bustle, and see justice done to it by the managers. I lament that such a superannuated being as myself is not only totally incapable of that office, but that I am utterly unacquainted with the managers, and now too retired to form new connections. I was still more concerned, Sir, to hear of your unhappy accident, though the bad consequences are past.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Berkeley Square, Jan. 27, 1780.

I HAVE returned your tragedy, Sir, to Mr. Sheridan, after having read it again, and without wishing any more alterations than the few I hinted before. There may be some few incorrectnesses, but none of much consequence.

I must again applaud your art and judgment, Sir, in having made so rational a play out of my wild tale: and where you have changed the arrangement of the incidents, you have applied them to great advantage. The characters of the mother and daughter you have rendered more natural by giving jealousy to the mother, and more passion to the daughter. In short, you have both honoured and improved my outlines: my vanity is content, and truth enjoins me to do justice. Bishop Warburton, in his additional notes to Pope's works, which I saw in print in his bookseller's hands, though they have not yet been published, observed that the plan of *The Castle of Otranto* was regularly a drama² (an

¹ Now first printed.

² Bishop Warburton's panegyric on *The Castle of Otranto* appears in a note to the following lines in Pope's imitation of one of Horace's epistles;—

“Then peers grew proud in horsemanship t' excel,
Newmarket's glory rose as Britain's fell;
The soldier breathed the gallantries of France,
And ev'ry flow'ry courtier writ Romance.”

“Amidst all this nonsense,” says the Bishop, “when things were at the worst, we have been lately entertained with what I will venture to call, a masterpiece in the Fable; and of a new species likewise. The piece I

intention I am sure I do not pretend to have conceived; nor, indeed, can I venture to affirm that I had any intention at all but to amuse myself—no, not even a plan, till some pages were written). You, Sir, have realized his idea, and yet I believe the Bishop would be surprised to see how well you have succeeded. One cannot be quite ashamed of one's follies, if genius condescends to adopt, and put them to a sensible use. Miss Aikin flattered me even by stooping to tread in my eccentric steps. Her "Fragment," though but a specimen, showed her talent for imprinting terror. I cannot compliment the author of the "Old English Baron," professedly written in imitation, but as a corrective of *The Castle of Otranto*. It was totally void of imagination and interest; had scarce any incidents; and, though it condemned the marvellous, admitted a ghost. I suppose the author thought a tame ghost might come within the laws of probability. You alone, Sir, have kept within nature, and made superstition supply the place of phenomenon, yet acting as the agent of divine justice—a beautiful use of bigotry.

I was mistaken in thinking the end of the first act deficient. The leaves stuck together, and, there intervening two or three blank pages between the first and second acts, I examined no farther, but concluded the former imperfect, which on the second reading I found it was not.

I imagine, Sir, that the theatres of Dublin cannot have fewer good performers than those of London; may I ask why you prefer ours? Your own directions and instructions would be of great advantage to your play; especially if you suspect antitragic prejudices in the managers. You, too, would be the best judge at the rehearsal of what might be improvements. Managers will take liberties, and often curtail necessary speeches, so as to produce nonsense. Methinks it is unkind to send a child, of which you have so much reason to be proud, to a Foundling Hospital.

mean is *The Castle of Otranto*. The scene is laid in Gothic chivalry; where a beautiful imagination, supported by strength of judgment, has enabled the author to go beyond his subject, and effect the full purpose of the ancient tragedy; that is, to purge the passions by pity and terror, in colouring as great and harmonious as in any of the best dramatic writers."—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 5, 1780.

I HAVE been turning over the new second volume of the *Biographia*, and find the additions very poor and lean performances. The lives entirely new are partial and flattering, being contributions of the friends of those whose lives are recorded. This publication made at a time when I have lived to see several of my contemporaries deposited in this national temple of fame has made me smile, and reflect that many preceding authors, who have been installed there with much respect, may have been as trifling personages as those we have known and now behold consecrated to memory. Three or four have struck me particularly, as Dr. Birch,¹ who was a worthy, good-natured soul, full of industry and activity, and running about like a young setting-dog in quest of anything, new or old, and with no parts, taste, or judgment. Then there is Dr. Blackwell,² the most impertinent literary coxcomb upon earth—but the editor has been so just as to insert a very merited satire on his Court of Augustus.

The third is Dr. Brown, that mountebank, who for a little time made as much noise by his *Estimate*, as ever quack did by a nostrum. I do not know if I ever told you how much I was struck the only time I ever saw him. You know one object, and the anathemas of his *Estimate* was the Italian Opera; yet did I find him one evening, in Passion Week, accompanying some of the Italian singers, at a concert at Lady Carlisle's. A clergyman, no doubt, is not obliged to be on his knees the whole week before Easter, and music and a concert are harmless amusements; but when Cato or Calvin are out of character, reformation becomes ridiculous

¹ See vol. ii. p. 58.—E.

² Dr. Thomas Blackwell, principal of the Marischal College in Aberdeen. Besides the above work, he wrote "*An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*," and "*Letters concerning Mythology*." He died in 1757.

— but poor Dr. Brown was mad,¹ and therefore might be in earnest, whether he played the fool or the reformer.

You recollect, perhaps, the threat of Dr. Kippis to me, which is to be executed on my father, for my calling the first edition of the *Biographia the Vindictio Britannica* — but observe how truth emerges at last ! In his new volume he confesses that the article of Lord Arlington, which I had specified as one of the most censurable, is the one most deserving that censure, and that the character of Lord Arlington is “palliated beyond all truth and reason” — words stronger than mine — yet mine deserved to draw vengeance on my father ! so a Presbyterian divine inverts divine judgment, and visits the sins of the children on the parents !

Cardinal Beaton’s character, softened in the first edition, gentle Dr. Kippis pronounces “extremely detestable” — yet was I to blame for hinting such defects in that work ! — and yet my words are quoted to show that Lord Orrery’s poetry was ridiculously bad. In like manner, Mr. Cumberland, who assumes the whole honour of publishing his grandfather’s *Lucan*, and does not deign to mention its being published at Strawberry-hill, (though by the way I believe it will be oftener purchased for having been printed there, than for wearing Mr. Cumberland’s name to the dedication,) and yet he quotes me for having praised his ancestor in one of my publications. These little instances of pride and spleen divert me, and then make me reflect sadly on human weaknesses. I am very apt myself to like what flatters my opinions or passions, and to reject scornfully what thwarts them, even in the same persons. The more one lives, the more one discovers one’s uglinesses in the features of others ! Adieu ! dear Sir : I hope you do not suffer by this severe season.

P. S. I remember two other instances, where my impartiality, or at least my sincerity, have exposed me to double censure. You perhaps condemned my severity on Charles the First; yet the late Mr. Hollis wrote against me in the newspapers, for condemning the republicans for their destruc-

¹ In September 1766, he destroyed himself in a fit of insanity. See vol. iii. p. 90.—E.

tion of ancient monuments. Some blamed me for undervaluing the Flemish and Dutch pictures in my preface to the *Ædes Walpolianæ*. Barry the painter, because I laughed at his extravagances, says, in his rejection of that school, "But I leave them to be admired by the Hon. Horace Walpole, and such judges." Would not one think I had been their champion!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 27, 1780.

UNAPT as you are to inquire after news, dear Sir, you wish to have Admiral Rodney's victory confirmed.¹ I can now assure you, that he has had a considerable advantage, and took at least four Spanish men-of-war, and an admiral, who they say is since dead of his wounds. We must be glad of these deplorable successes — but I heartily wish we had no longer occasion to hope for the destruction of any of our species — but, alas! it looks as if devastation would still open new fields of blood! The prospect darkens even at home — but, however you and I may differ in our political principles, it would be happy if everybody would pursue theirs with as little rancour. How seldom does it happen in political contests, that any side can count anything but its wounds! your habits seclude you from meddling in our divisions; so do my age and my illnesses me. Sixty-two is not a season for bustling among young partisans. Indeed, if the times grow perfectly serious, I shall not wish to reach sixty-three. Even a superannuated spectator is then a miserable being; for though insensibility is one of the softenings of old age, neither one's feelings nor enjoyments can be accompanied with tranquillity. We veterans must hide ourselves in inglorious se-

¹ Admiral Sir George Rodney, who had been dispatched to the relief of Gibraltar, the garrison of which was much distressed for provisions, after taking a convoy of Spanish ships bound to the Caraccas, fell in, on the 16th of February, off Cape St. Vincent, with the Spanish fleet, commanded by Don Juan Langara, which he defeated, and captured four sail of the line.—E.

curity, and lament what we cannot prevent; nor shall be listened to, till misfortunes have brought the actors to their senses; and then it will be too late, or they will calm themselves faster than we could preach — but I hope, the experience of the last century will have some operation and check our animosities. Surely, too, we shall recollect the ruin a civil war would bring on, when accompanied by such collaterals as French and Spanish wars. Providence alone can steer us amidst all these rocks. I shall watch the interposition of its ægis with anxiety and humility. It saved us this last summer, and nothing else I am sure did; but often the mutual follies of enemies are the instruments of Heaven. If it pleases not to inspire wisdom, I shall be content if it extricates us by the reciprocal blunders and oversights of all parties — of which, at least, we ought never to despair. It is almost my systematic belief, that as cunning and penetration are seldom exerted for good ends, it is the absurdity of mankind that often acts as a succedaneum, and carries on and maintains the equilibrium that Heaven designed should subsist. Adieu, dear Sir! Shall we live to lay down our heads in peace? Yours ever.

28th.—A second volume of Sir George Rodney's exploits is arrived to-day. I do not know the authentic circumstances, for I have not been abroad yet, but they say he has taken four more Spanish ships of the line and five frigates; of the former, one of ninety guns. Spain was sick of the war before — how fortunate if she would renounce it!

I have just got a new History of Leicester, in six small volumes. It seems to be superficial; but the author is young and talks modestly; which, if it will not serve instead of merit, makes one at least hope he will improve, and not grow insolent on age and more knowledge. I have also received from Paris a copy of an illumination from La Cité des Dames of Christina of Pisa, in the French King's library. There is her own portrait with three allegoric figures. I have learnt much more about her, and of her amour with an English peer;¹ but I have not time to say more at present.

¹ John Montacute, Earl of Salisbury; who, arriving in Paris, as am-

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, March 6, 1780.

I HAVE this moment received your portrait in glass, dear Sir, and am impatient to thank you for it, and tell you how much I value it. It is better executed than I own I expected, and yet I am not quite satisfied with it. The drawing is a little incorrect, the eyes too small in proportion, and the mouth exaggerated. In short, it is a strong likeness of your features, but not of your countenance, which is better, and more serene. However, I am enough content to place it at Strawberry amongst all my favourite, brittle, transitory relics, which will soon vanish with their founder—and with his no great unwillingness for himself.

I take it ill, that you should think I should suspect you of asking *indirectly* for my Noble Authors—and much more if you would not be so free as to ask for them *directly*—a most trifling present surely—and from you who have made me a thousand! I know I have some copies in my old house in Arlington-street, I hope of both volumes, I am sure of the second. I will soon go thither and look for them.

I have gone through the six volumes of Leicester. The author is so modest and so humble, that I am quite sorry it is so very bad a work; the arrangement detestable, the materials trifling, his reflections humane but silly. He disposes all under reigns of Roman emperors and English kings, whether they did anything or nothing at Leicester. I am sorry I have such predilection for the histories of particular counties and towns: there certainly does not exist a worse class of reading.

Dr. E. made me a visit last week. He is not at all less vociferous for his disgrace. I wish I had any Guinea-fowls. I can easily get you some eggs from Lady Ailesbury, and will

bassador from Richard II, to demand in marriage the Princess Isabel, daughter of Charles V, soon after the death of Castel, the husband of Christine, was so struck with her beauty and accomplishments as to offer her his hand. This Christine respectfully declined; upon which the Earl bade adieu to love, renounced marriage, and, with her consent, brought her eldest son with him to England, to educate and protect.—E.

ask her for some, that you may have the pleasure of rearing your own chicks—but how can you bear their noise? they are more discordant and clamorous than peacocks. How shall I convey the eggs?

I smiled at Dr. Kippis's bestowing the victory on Dean Milles, and a sprig on Mr. Masters. I regard it as I should, if the sexton of Broad-street St. Giles's were to make a lower bow to a cheesemonger of his own parish than to me. They are all three haberdashers of small wares, and welcome to each other's civilities. When such men are summoned to a jury on one of their own trade, it is natural they should be partial. They do not reason, but recollect how much themselves have overcharged some yards of buckram. Adieu!

P. S. Mr. Pennicott has shown me a most curious and delightful picture. It is Rose, the royal gardener, presenting the first pine-apple raised in England to Charles II. They are in a garden, with a view of a good private house, such as there are several at Sunbury and about London. It is by far the best likeness of the King I ever saw; the countenance cheerful, good-humoured, and very sensible. He is in brown, lined with orange, and many black ribands, a large flapped hat, dark wig, not tied up, nor yet bushy, a point cravat, no waistcoat, and a tasselled handkerchief, hanging from a low pocket. The whole is of the smaller landscape size, and extremely well coloured, with perfect harmony. It was a legacy from London, grandson of him who was partner with Wise.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, March 13, 1780.

You compliment me, my good friend, on a sagacity that is surely very common. How frequently do we see portraits that have caught the features and missed the countenance or character, which is far more difficult to hit; nor is it unfrequent to hear that remark made.

I have confessed to you that I am fond of local histories. It is the general execution of them that I condemn, and that

I call "the worst kind of reading." I cannot comprehend but that they might be performed with taste. I did mention this winter the new edition of Atkyns's Gloucestershire, as having additional descriptions of situations that I thought had merit. I have just got another, a View of Northumberland, in two volumes, quarto, with cuts;¹ but I do not devour it fast; for the author's predilection is to Roman antiquities, which, such as are found in this island, are very indifferent, and inspire me with little curiosity. A barbarous country, so remote from the seat of empire, and occupied by a few legions that very rarely decided any great events, is not very interesting, though one's own country; nor do I care a straw for a stone that preserves the name of a standard-bearer of a cohort, or of a colonel's daughter. Then I have no patience to read the tiresome disputes of antiquaries to settle forgotten names of vanished towns, and to prove that such a village was called something else in Antoninus's Itinerary. I do not say the Gothic antiquities I like are of more importance; but at least they exist. The site of a Roman camp, of which nothing remains but a bank, gives me not the smallest pleasure. One knows they had square camps — has one a clearer idea from the spot, which is barely distinguishable? How often does it happen, that the lumps of earth are so imperfect, that it is never clear whether they are Roman, Druidic, Danish, or Saxon fragments: the moment it is uncertain, it is plain they furnish no specific idea of art or history, and then I neither desire to see or read of them. I have been diverted, too, by another work, in which I am personally a little concerned. Yesterday was published an octavo, pretending to contain the correspondence of Hackman and Miss Ray, that he murdered.² I doubt whether the letters are genuine; and

¹ "A View of Northumberland; with an Excursion to the Abbey of Melrose, in Scotland, in the Year 1776;" by William Hutchinson, F.A.S. Two volumes 4to.; 1778-80.—E.

² The work here alluded to was written by Sir Herbert Croft, Bart. It was a compound of fact and fiction, called "Love and Madness, a Story too true, in a Series of Letters between Parties, whose names would, perhaps, be mentioned, were they less known or less lamented. London, 1780." The work ran through several editions. In 1800, Sir Herbert published "Chatterton and Love and Madness, in a Letter

yet, if fictitious, they are executed well, and enter into his character: hers appear less natural, and yet the editors were certainly more likely to be in possession of hers than his. It is not probable that Lord Sandwich should have sent what he found in her apartments to the press. No account is pretended to be given of how they came to light.

You will wonder how I should be concerned in this correspondence, who never saw either of the lovers in my days. In fact, my being dragged in is a reason for doubting the authenticity; nor can I believe that the long letter in which I am frequently mentioned could be written by the wretched lunatic. It pretends that Miss Ray desired him to give her a particular account of Chatterton. He does give a most ample one; but is there a glimpse of probability that a being so frantic should have gone to Bristol, and sifted Chatterton's sister and others with as much cool curiosity as Mr. Lort could do? and at such a moment! Besides, he murdered Miss Ray, I think, in March; my printed defence was not at all dispersed before the preceding January or February, nor do I conceive that Hackman could even see it. There are notes, indeed, by the editor, who has certainly seen it; but I rather imagine that the editor, whoever he is, composed the whole volume. I am acquitted of being accessory to the lad's death, which is gracious; but much blamed for speaking of his bad character, and for being too hard on his forgeries, though I took so much pains to specify the innocence of them; and for his character, I only quoted the words of his own editor and panegyrist. I did not repeat what Dr. Goldsmith told me at the Royal Academy, where I first heard of his death, that he went by the appellation of "The Young Villain;" but it is not new to me, as you know, to be blamed by two opposite parties. The editor has in one place confounded me and my uncle; who, he says, as is true, checked Lord Chatham for being too forward a young man in 1740. In that year I was not even come into Parliament; and must have been

from Sir Herbert Croft to Mr. Nichols." Boswell says, that Dr. Johnson greatly disapproved of mingling real facts with fiction, and on this account censured "Love and Madness."—E.

absurd indeed if I had taunted Lord Chatham with youth, who was, at least, six or seven years younger than he was; and how could he reply by reproaching me with old age, who was then not twenty-three? I shall make no answer to these absurdities, nor to any part of the work. Blunder, I see, people will, and talk of what they do not understand? and what care I? There is another trifling mistake of still less consequence. The editor supposes it was Macpherson who communicated Ossian to me. It was Sir David Dalrymple who sent me the first specimen.¹ Macpherson did once come to me, but my credulity was then a little shaken.

Lady Ailesbury has promised me Guinea-eggs for you, but they have not yet begun to lay. I am well acquainted with Lady Craven's little tale, dedicated to me.² It is careless and incorrect, but there are very pretty things in it. I will stop, for I fear I have written to you too much lately. One you did not mention: I think it was of the 28th of last month.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, March 30, 1780.

I CANNOT be told that you are extremely ill, and refrain from begging to hear that you are better. Let me have but one line; if it is good, it will satisfy me. If you was not out of order, I would scold you for again making excuses about the Noble Authors; it was not kind to be so formal about a trifle.

We do not differ so much in politics as you think, for when they grow too serious, they are so far from inflaming my zeal, they make me more moderate; and I can as easily discern the faults on my own side as on the other; nor would assist Whigs more than Tories in altering the constitution. The project of annual parliaments, or of adding a hundred members to the House of Commons, would, I think, be very unwise, and will never have my approbation — but a temperate man is not

¹ See vol. iv. p. 55.—E.

² Entitled "The Miniature Picture."—E.

likely to be listened to in turbulent times; and when one has not youth and lungs, or ambition, to make oneself attended to, one can only be silent and lament, and preserve oneself blameless of any mischief that is done or attempted.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, May 11, 1780.

MR. GODFREY, the engraver, told me yesterday that Mr. Tyson is dead.¹ I am sorry for it, though he had left me off. A much older friend of mine died yesterday; but of whom I must say the same, George Montagu, whom you must remember at Eton and Cambridge. I should have been exceedingly concerned for him a few years ago; but he had dropped me, partly from politics and partly from caprice, for we never had any quarrel; but he was grown an excessive humourist, and had shed almost all his friends as well as me. He had parts, and infinite vivacity and originality till of late years; and it grieved me much that he had changed towards me, after a friendship of between thirty and forty years.

I am told that a nephew of the provost of King's has preached and printed a most flaming sermon, which condemns the whole Opposition to the stake. Pray who is it, and on what occasion? Mr. Bryant has published an Answer to Dr. Priestley.² I bought it, but though I have a great value for the author, the subject is so metaphysical, and so above human decision, I soon laid it aside. I hope you can send me a good account of yourself, though the spring is so unfavourable. Yours most sincerely.

¹ Mr. Cole, in a letter of the 14th, says, "the loss of poor Mr. Tyson shocked and afflicted me more than I thought it possible I could have been afflicted: since the loss of Mr. Gray, I have lamented no one so much. God rest his soul! I hope he is happy; and, was it not for those he has left behind, I am so much of a philosopher, now the affair is over, I would prefer the exchange."—E.

² It was entitled "An Address to Dr. Priestley upon his Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated."—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Friday night, May 19, 1780.

By to-morrow's coach you will receive a box of Guinea-hens' eggs, which Lady Ailesbury sent me to-day from Park-place. I hope they will arrive safe and all be hatched.

I thank you for the account of the sermon and the portrait of the uncle. They will satisfy me without buying the former. As I knew Mr. Joseph Spence,¹ I do not think I should have been so much delighted as Dr. Kippis with reading his letters. He was a good-natured, harmless little soul, but more like a silver penny than a genius. It was a neat, fiddle-faddle, bit of sterling, that had read good books and kept good company, but was too trifling for use, and only fit to please a child.

I hesitate on purchasing Mr. Gough's second edition. I do not think there was a guinea's worth of entertainment in the first; how can the additions be worth a guinea and a half? I have been aware of the royal author you tell me of, and have noted him for a future edition; but that will not appear in my own time; because, besides that, it will have the castrations in my original copy, and other editions, that I am not impatient to produce. I have been solicited to reprint the work, but do not think it fair to give a very imperfect edition when I could print it complete, which I do not choose to do, as I have an aversion to literary squabbles: one seems to think one's self too important when one engages in a controversy on one's writings; and when one does not vindicate them, the answerer passes for victor, as you see Dr. Kippis allots the palm to Dr. Milles, though you know I have so much more to say in defence of my hypothesis. I have actually some hopes of still more, of which I have heard, but till I see it, I shall not reckon upon it as on my side.

Mr. Lort told me of King James's Procession to St. Paul's; but they ask such a price for it, and I care so little for James I, that I have not been to look at the picture.

¹ See vol. i. p. 65.—E.

Your electioneering will probably be increased immediately. Old Mr. Thomas Townshend is at the point of death.¹ The Parliament will probably be dissolved before another session. We wanted nothing but drink to inflame our madness, which I do not confine to politics; but what signifies it to throw out general censures? We old folks are apt to think nobody wise but ourselves. I wish the disgraces of these last two or three years did not justify a little severity more than flows from the peevishness of years! Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, May 30, 1780.

I HOPE you will bring your eggs to a fair market. At last I have got from Bonus my altar-doors which I bought at Mr. Ives's; he has repaired them admirably. I would not suffer him to repaint or varnish them. Three are indubitably Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, Cardinal Beaufort, and Archbishop Kemp. The fourth I cannot make out. It is a man in a crimson garment lined with white, and not tonsured. He is in the stable with cattle, and has the air of Joseph; but over his head hangs a large shield with these arms. * * * *² The Cornish choughs are sable on or; the other three divisions are gules, on the first of which is a gold crescent.

The second arms have three bulls' heads sable, horned or. The chevron was so changed that Bonus thought it sable; but I think it was gules, and then it would be Bullen or Boleyn. Lord de Ferrars says, the first are the arms of Sir Bartholomew Tate, who he finds married a Sanders. Edmondson's new Dictionary of Heraldry confirms both arms for Tate and

¹ The Right Hon. Thomas Townshend, son of Charles second Viscount Townshend, many years member for the University of Cambridge. He died a few days after the date of this letter. He was a most elegant scholar, and lived in acquaintance and familiarity with most of the considerable men of his time. In early life he entered into the secretary of state's office under his father, whom he accompanied in his journeys to Germany with George the First and Second. At the time of his death he was in his seventy-ninth year.—E.

² Here Mr. Walpole had sketched in a rough draught of the arms.

Sanders, except that Sanders bore the chevron ermine, which it may have been. But what I wish to discover is, whether Sir Bartholomew Tate was a benefactor to St. Edmondsbury, whence these doors came, or was in any shape a retainer to the Duke of Gloucester or Cardinal Beaufort. The Duke's and Sir Bartholomew's figures were on the insides of the doors (which I have had sawed into four pannels), and are painted in a far superior style to the Cardinal and the Archbishop, which are very hard and dry. The two others are so good that they are in the style of the school of the Caracci. They at least were painted by some Italian; the draperies have large and bold folds, and one wonders how they could be executed in the reign of Henry VI. I shall be very glad if you can help me to any lights, at least about Sir Bartholomew. I intend to place them in my chapel, as they will aptly accompany the shrine. The Duke and Archbishop's agree perfectly with their portraits in my Marriage of Henry VI, and prove how rightly I guessed. The Cardinal's is rather a longer and thinner visage, but that he might have in the latter end of life; and in the Marriage he has the red bonnet on, which shortens his face. On the door he is represented in the character he ought to have possessed, a pious, contrite look, not the truer resemblance which Shakspeare drew—"He dies, and makes no sign!"—but Annibal Caracci himself could not paint like our Raphael poet! Pray don't venture yourself in any more electioneering riots: you see the mob do not respect poets, nor, I suppose, antiquaries.

P.S. I am in no haste for an answer to my queries.

TO MRS. ABINGTON.¹

Strawberry Hill, June 11, 1780.

MADAM,

You may certainly always command me and my house. My common custom is to give a ticket for only four persons at

¹ Now first printed.

a time ; but it would be very insolent in me, when all laws are set at nought, to pretend to prescribe rules. At such times there is a shadow of authority in setting the laws aside by the legislature itself ; and though I have no army to supply their place, I declare Mrs. Abington may march through all my dominions at the head of as large a troop as she pleases. I do not say, as she can muster and command ; for then I am sure my house would not hold them. The day, too, is at her own choice ; and the master is her very obedient humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, June 12, 1780.

MY DEAR LORD,

If the late events had been within the common proportion of news, I would have tried to entertain your lordship with an account of them ; but they were far beyond that size, and could only create horror and indignation. Religion has often been the cloak of injustice, outrage, and villany : in our late tumults,¹ it scarce kept on its mask a moment ; its persecution was downright robbery ; and it was so drunk, that it killed its banditti faster than they could plunder. The tumults have been carried on in so violent and scandalous a manner, that I trust they will have no copies. When prisons are levelled to the ground, when the Bank is aimed at, and reformation is attempted by conflagrations, the savages of Canada

¹ The riots of 1780, when Lord George Gordon raised a no-popery cry, and assembled many thousand persons in St. George's Fields, to accompany him to the House of Commons, with a petition for the repeal of the act passed for the relief of the Roman Catholics in the preceding session. The petition was, of course, rejected ; which being communicated to the mob by Lord George, they dispersed for a while, but on that evening commenced their work of mischief, destroying two Catholic chapels in Duke-street and Warwick-street : Newgate and all the other prisons were likewise fired ; the Bank was attempted ; and the riot was not quelled until 210 persons were killed and 248 wounded, of whom seventy-five died in the hospitals. Lord George was committed to the Tower ; and many of the ringleaders, after being tried by special commissioners, suffered the extreme penalty of the law.—E.

are the only fit allies of Lord George Gordon¹ and his crew. The Tower is much too dignified a prison for him—but he had left no other.

I came out of town on Friday, having seen a good deal of the shocking transactions of Wednesday night—in fact, it was difficult to be in London, and not see or think some part of it in flames. I saw those of the King's Bench, New Prison, and those on the three sides of the Fleet-market, which united into one blaze.² The town and parks are now one camp—the next disagreeable sight to the capital being in ashes. It will still not have been a fatal tragedy, if it brings the nation *one* and all to their senses. It will still be not quite an unhappy country, if we reflect that the old constitution, exactly as it was in the last reign, was the most desirable of any in the universe. It made us *then* the first people in Europe—we have a vast deal of ground to recover—but can we take a better path than that which King William pointed out to us? I mean the system he left us at the Revolution. I am averse to *all* changes of it—it fitted us just as it was.

For some time even individuals must be upon their guard. Our new and now imprisoned apostle has delivered so many congenial Saint Peters from gaol, that one hears of nothing but robberies on the highway. Your lordship's sister, Lady Browne, and I have been at Twickenham-park this evening, and kept together, and had a horseman at our return. Baron d'Aguilar was shot at in that very lane on Thursday night. A

¹ Lord George Gordon was brother of Alexander Duke of Gordon. He was considered not to be at all times of sound mind. Some years after his acquittal, on the indictment preferred against him in the Court of King's Bench as instigator of the riots, he was convicted of a libel on Marie Antoinette and Count d'Ademar, one of the French ministry. To avoid punishment, he fled the country; but shortly afterwards was discovered at Birmingham in the garb of a Jew, and committed to Newgate, pursuant to his sentence, where he lived some time, professing the Jewish religion, having undergone the extreme rites of it, and where he died, in November 1793.—E.

² In her reply to a letter from Walpole, giving an account of these riots, Madame du Deffand says—"Rien n'est plus affreux que tout ce qui arrive chez vous. Votre liberté ne me séduit point; cette liberté tant vantée me paroît bien plus onéreuse que notre esclavage; mais il ne m'appartient pas de traiter de telles matières: permettez-moi de blâmer votre indiscretion, de vous aller promener dans les rues pendant ce vacarme."—E.

troop of the fugitives had rendezvoused in Combe Wood, and were dislodged thence yesterday by the light horse.

I do not know a syllable but what relates to these disturbances. The newspapers have neglected few truths. Lies, without their natural propensity to falsehoods, they could not avoid, for every minute produces some, at least exaggerations. We were threatened with swarms of good Protestants *à bruler* from all quarters, and report sent various detachments from the metropolis on similar errands; but thank God they have been but reports! Oh! when shall we have peace and tranquillity? I hope your lordship and Lady Strafford will at least enjoy the latter in your charming woods. I have long doubted which of our passions is the strongest—perhaps every one of them is equally strong in some person or other—but I have no doubt but ambition is the most detestable, and the most inexcusable; for its mischiefs are by far the most extensive, and its enjoyments by no means proportioned to its anxieties. The latter, I believe, is the case of most passions—but then all but ambition cost little pain to any but the possessor. An ambitious man must be divested of all feeling but for himself. The torment of others is his high road to happiness. Were the transmigration of souls true, and accompanied by consciousness, how delighted would Alexander or Croesus be to find themselves on four legs, and divested of a wish to conquer new worlds, or to heap up all the wealth of this! Adieu, my dear lord!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1780.

You may like to know one is alive, dear Sir, after a massacre, and the conflagration of a capital. I was in it, both on the Friday and on the *Black Wednesday*; the most horrible sight I ever beheld, and which, for six hours together, I expected to end in half the town being reduced to ashes. I can give you little account of the original of this shocking affair; negligence was certainly its nurse, and religion only its god-

mother. The ostensible author is in the Tower. Twelve or fourteen thousand men have quelled all tumults; and as no bad account is come from the country, except for a moment at Bath, and as eight days have passed,—nay, more, since the commencement,—I flatter myself the whole nation is shocked at the scene; and that, if plan there was, it was laid only in and for the metropolis. The lowest and most villanous of the people, and to no great amount, were almost the sole actors.

I hope your electioneering riotry¹ has not, nor will mix in these tumults. It would be most absurd; for Lord Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond, Sir George Saville, and Mr. Burke, the patrons of toleration, were devoted to destruction as much as the ministers. The rails torn from Sir George's house were the chief weapons and instruments of the mob. For the honour of the nation I should be glad to have it proved that the French were the engineers. You and I have lived too long for our comfort—shall we close our eyes in peace? I will not trouble you more about the arms I sent you: I should like that they were those of the family of Boleyn; and since I cannot be sure they were not, why should not I fancy them so? I revert to the prayer for peace. You and I, that can amuse ourselves with our books and papers, feel as much indignation at the turbulent as they have scorn for us. It is hard at least that they who disturb nobody can have no asylum in which to pursue their innoxious indolence! Who is secure against Jack Straw and a whirlwind? How I abominate Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, who routed the poor Otaheitans out of the centre of the ocean, and carried our abominable passions amongst them! not even that poor little speck could escape European restlessness. Well, I have seen many tempestuous scenes, and outlived them! the present prospect is too thick to see through—it is well hope never forsakes us. Adieu!

¹ Of the "electioneering riotry" going on at this time in Cambridge-shire, Mr. Cole, in a letter of the 14th of May, gives the following account:—"Electioneering madness and faction have inflamed this county to such a degree, that the peace it has enjoyed for above half a century may take as long a time before it returns again. Yesterday, the three candidates were nominated; the Duke of Rutland's brother, the late Mr. Charles Yorke's son, and Sir Sampson Gideon, whose expenses for

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1780.

I ANSWER your letter the moment I receive it, to beg you will by no means take any notice, not even indirectly and without my name, of the Life of Mr. Baker. I am earnest against its being known to exist. I should be teased to show it. Mr. Gough might inquire about it—I do not desire his acquaintance; and above all things I am determined, if I can help it, to have no controversy while I live. You know I have hitherto suppressed my answers to the critics of Richard III. for that reason; and above all things, I hate theologic or political controversy—nor need you fear my disputing with you, though we disagree very considerably indeed about Papists and Presbyterians. I hope you have not yet sent the manuscript to Mr. Lort, and if you have not, do entreat you to efface undecipherably what you have said about my Life of Mr. Baker.

Pray satisfy me that no mention of it shall appear in print. I can by no means consent to it, and I am sure you will prevent it. Yours sincerely.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1780.

I AM very happy at receiving a letter from your lordship this moment, as I thought it very long since we had corresponded, but am afraid of being troublesome, when I have not the excuse of thanking you, or something worth telling you, which in truth is not the case at present. No soul, whether

this month have been enormous, beyond all belief. Sending my servant on a particular message to Sir Sampson, he found him in bed, not well, and probably half asleep; for he not only wrote the direction to two covers which I sent him, but sealed them both, though they were only covers. I wonder, indeed, that he is alive, considering the immense fatigue and necessary drinking he must undergo—a miserable hard task to get into Parliament!” The contest terminated in the return of Lord Robert Manners, who died, in April 1782, of the wounds he received in the great sea-fight in the West Indies; and of Mr. Philip Yorke, who, in 1790, succeeded his uncle as Earl of Hardwicke.—E.

interested or not, but deafens one about elections. I always detested them, even when in Parliament; and when I lived a good deal at White's, preferred hearing of Newmarket to elections; for the former, being uttered in a language I did not understand, did not engage my attention; but as they talked of elections in *English*, I could not help knowing what they said. It does surprise me, I own, that people can choose to stuff their heads with details and circumstances, of which in six weeks they will never hear or think more. The weather till now has been the chief topic of conversation. Of late it has been the third very hot summer; but refreshed by so little rain, that the banks of the Thames have been and are, I believe, like those of the Manzanares. The night before last we had some good showers, and to-day a thick fog has dissolved in some as thin as gauze. Still I am not quite sorry to enjoy the weather of adust climates without their tempests and insects. Lady Cowper I lately visited, and but lately: if what I hear is true, I shall be a gainer, for they talk of Lord Duncannon having her house at Richmond: like your lordship, I confess I was surprised at his choice. I know nothing to the prejudice of the young lady;¹ but I should not have selected, for so gentle and very amiable a man, a sister of the empress of fashion,² nor a daughter of the goddess of wisdom.³

They talk of great dissatisfactions in the fleet. Geary and Barrington are certainly retired. It looks, if this deplorable war should continue, as if all our commanders by sea and land were to be disgraced or disgusted.

The people here have christened Mr. Shirley's new house, *Spite-hall*.⁴ It is dismal to think that one may live to seventy-seven, and go out of the world doing as ill-natured an act as possible! When I am reduced to detail the gazette of Twickenham, I had better release your lordship; but either way it

¹ In the following November, Lord Duncannon married Henrietta-Frances, second daughter of John first Earl Spencer.—E.

² Georgiana, eldest daughter of John first Earl Spencer; married, in 1774, to the Duke of Devonshire.—E.

³ Margaret-Georgiana, daughter of the Right Hon. Stephen Poyntz; married, in 1755, to John first Earl Spencer.—E.

⁴ Because built, it was said, on purpose to intercept a view of the Thames from his opposite neighbour.

is from the utmost attention and respect for your lordship and Lady Strafford, as I am ever most devotedly and gratefully yours.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I MUST inquire how you do after all your electioneering agitations, which have growled even around your hermitage. Candidates and their emissaries are like Pope's authors,

"They pierce our thickets, through our groves they glide."

However, I have barred my doors; and when I would not go to an election for myself, I would not for any one else.

Has not a third real summer, and so very dry one, assisted your complaints? I have been remarkably well, and better than for these five years. Would I could say the same of all my friends — but, alas! I expect every day to hear that I have lost my dear old friend Madame du Deffand.¹ She was indeed near eighty-four, but retained all her interior faculties — two days ago the letters from Paris forbade all hopes. So I reckon myself dead as to France, where I have kept up no other connexion.

¹ In the last letter Madame du Deffand ever wrote to Walpole, dated the 22nd of August, she thus describes her situation: — "Je vous mandai dans ma dernière que je ne me portais pas bien; c'est encore pis aujourd'hui. Je suis d'une foiblesse et d'un abattement excessifs; ma voix est éteinte, je ne puis me soutenir sur mes jambes, je ne puis me donner aucun mouvement, j'ai le cœur enveloppé, j'ai de la peine à croire que cet état ne m'annonce une fin prochaine. Je n'ai pas la force d'en être effrayée; et, ne vous devant revoir de ma vie, je n'ai rien à regretter. Divertissez-vous, mon ami, le plus que vous pourrez; ne vous affligez point de mon état; nous étions presque perdus l'un pour l'autre; nous ne nous devions jamais revoir; vous me regretterez, parce qu'on est bien-aise de se savoir aimé. Peut-être que par la suite Wiart vous mandera de mes nouvelles; c'est une fatigue pour moi de dicter." From this day she kept her bed. On the 8th of September Mr. Walpole had written to her, expressing his great anxiety for her. To his inquiries she was unable to dictate an answer. Her ante-room continued every day crowded with the persons who had before surrounded her suppertable. Her weakness became excessive; but she suffered no pain, and possessed her memory, understanding, and ideas till within the last eight

I am going at last to publish my fourth volume of *Painters*, which, though printed so long, I have literally treated by Horace's rule, "*Nonumque prematur in annum.*" Tell me how I shall send it to you. Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Oct. 3, 1780.

I DID not go to Malvern, and therefore cannot certify you, my good Sir, whether Tom Hearne mistook stone for brass or not, though I dare to say your criticism is just.

My book, if I can possibly, shall go to the inn to-morrow, or next day at least. You will find a great deal of rubbish in it, with all your partiality — but I shall have done with it.

I cannot thank you enough for your goodness about your notes that you promised Mr. Grose; but I cannot possibly be less generous and less disinterested, nor can by any means be the cause of your breaking your word. In short, I insist on your sending your notes to him — and as to my *Life of Mr. Baker*, if it is known to exist, nobody can make me produce it sooner than I please, nor at all if I do not please; so pray send your accounts, and leave me to be stout with our antiquaries, or curious. I shall not satisfy the latter, and don't care a straw for the former.

The Master of Pembroke (who he is, I don't know¹) is like the lover who said,

“Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been?”

I have been in Kent with Mr. Barrett, but was not at Ramsgate; the Master, going thither, perhaps saw me. It is a mistake not worth rectifying. I have no time for more, being in the midst of the delivery of my books. Yours ever.

days of her existence, when a lethargic insensibility took place, which terminated in death, without effort or struggle, on the 24th of September. She was buried, according to her own direction, in the plainest manner, in her parish church of St. Sulpice. To Mr. Walpole she bequeathed the whole of her manuscripts, papers, letters, and books, of every description; with a permission to the Prince of Beauvau to take a copy of any of the papers he might desire.—E.

¹ Dr. James Brown; see vol. v. p. 318.—E.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 11, 1780.

I AM afraid you are not well, my good Sir; for you are so obligingly punctual, that I think you would have acknowledged the receipt of my last volume, if you were not out of order.

Lord Dacre lent me the new edition of Mr. Gough's Topography, and the ancient maps and quantity of additions tempted me to buy it. I have not gone through much above half of the first volume, and find it more entertaining than the first edition. This is no partiality; for I think he seems rather disposed, though civilly, to find cavils with me. Indeed, in the passage in which I am most mentioned, he not only gives a very confused, but quite a wrong account: as in other places, he records some trifles in my possession not worth recording — but I know that we antiquaries are but too apt to think, that whatever has had the honour of entering our ears, is worthy of being laid before the eyes of everybody else. The story I mean is p. xi. of the preface. Now the three volumes of drawings and tombs, by Mr. Lethueillier and Sir Charles Frederick, for which Mr. Gough says I refused two hundred pounds, and are now Lord Bute's, are not Lord Bute's, but mine, and for which I never was offered two hundred pounds, and for which I gave sixty pounds — full enough. The circumstances were much more entertaining than Mr. G.'s perplexed account. Bishop Lyttelton told me Sir Charles Frederick complained of Mr. L.'s not bequeathing them to him, as he had been a joint labourer with him; and that Sir Charles wished I would not bid against him for them, as they were to be sold by auction. I said this was a very reasonable request, and that I was ready to oblige Sir Charles; but as I heard others meant to bid high for the books, I should wish to know how far he would go, and that I would not oppose him; but should the books exceed the price Sir Charles was willing to give, I should like to be at liberty to bid for them against others.

However, added I, as Sir Charles (who lived then in Berkeley-square, as I did then in Arlington-street,) passes by my door every time he goes to the House of Commons, if he will call on me, we will make such agreement.—You will scarce believe the sequel. The dignity of Sir Charles Frederick was hurt that I should propose his making me the first visit, though to serve himself — nothing could be more out of my imagination than the ceremonial of visits; though when he was so simple as to make a point of it, I could not see how in any light I was called on to make the first visit — and so the treaty ended; and so I bought the books. There was another work, I think in two volumes, which was their Diary of their Tour, with a few slight views. Bishop Lyttelton proposed them to me, and engaged to get them for me from Mr. Lethueillier's sister for ten guineas. She hesitated, the Bishop died, I thought no more of them, and they may be what Lord Bute has. There is another assertion in Mr. Gough, which I can authentically contradict. He says Sir Matthew Decker first introduced ananas, p. 134. My very curious picture of Rose, the royal gardener, presenting the first ananas to Charles II. proves the culture here earlier by several years.

At page 373, he seems to doubt my assertion of Gravelot's making drawings of tombs in Gloucestershire, because he never met with any engravings from them. I took my account from Vertue, who certainly knew what he said. I bought at Vertue's own sale some of Gravelot's drawings of our regal monuments, which Vertue engraved: but, which is stronger, Mr. Gough himself a few pages after, viz. in p. 387, mentions Gravelot's drawings of Tewkesbury church; which being in Gloucestershire, Mr. G. might have believed me that Gravelot did draw in that county. This is a little like Mr. Masters's being angry with me for taking liberties with bishops and chancellors, and then abusing grossly one who had been both bishop and chancellor. I forgot that in the note on Sir Charles Frederick, Mr. Gough calls Mr. Worseley, Wortley. In page 354, he says Rooker exhibited a drawing of Waltham-cross to the Royal Academy

of Sciences — pray where is that academy? I suppose he means that of painting. I find a few omissions; one very comical; he says Penshurst was celebrated by Ben Jonson, and seems totally in the dark as to how much more fame it owes to Waller. We antiquaries are a little apt to get laughed at for knowing what everybody has forgotten, and for being ignorant of what every child knows. Do not tell him of these things, for I do not wish to vex him. I hope I was mistaken, and shall hear that you are well. Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 24, 1780.

I AM sorry I was so much in the right in guessing you had been ill, but at our age there is little sagacity in such divination. In my present holidays from the gout, I have a little rheumatism, or some of those accompaniments.

I have made several more notes to the new Topography, but none of consequence enough to transcribe. It is well it is a book only for the adept, or the scorners would often laugh. Mr. Gough, speaking of some cross that has been removed, says, there is now *an unmeaning market-house* in its place. Saving his reverence and our prejudices, I doubt there is a good deal more *meaning* in a market-house than in a cross. They tell me that there are numberless mistakes. Mr. Pennant, whom I saw yesterday, says so. *He* is not one of our plodders; rather the other extreme. His *corporal* spirits (for I cannot call them animal) do not allow him time to digest anything. He gave a round jump from ornithology to antiquity; and, as if they had any relation, thought he understood everything that lay between them. These adventures divert me who am got on shore, and find how sweet it is to look back on those who are toiling in deep waters, whether in ships, or cock-boats, or on old rotten planks. I am sorry for the Dean of Exeter; if he dies, I

conclude the leaden mace of the Antiquarian Society will be given to Judge Barrington,¹

“Et simili frondescet Virga metallo.”

I endeavoured to give our antiquaries a little wrench towards taste — but it was in vain. Sandby and our engravers have lent them a great deal — but there it stops. Captain Grose’s dissertations are as dull and silly as if they were written for the Ostrogoth maps of the beginning of the new Topography; and which are so square and so incomprehensible, that they look as if they were ichnographies of the new Jerusalem. I am delighted with having done with the professions of author and printer, and intend to be most comfortably lazy, I was going to say idle (but that would not be new) for the rest of my days.

If there was a peace, I would build my offices — if there is not soon, we shall be bankrupt — nay, I do not know what may happen as it is.—Well! Mr. Grose will have plenty of ruins to engrave! The Royal Academy will make a fine mass, with what remains of old Somerset-house.

Adieu! my good Sir. Let me know you are well. You want nothing else, for you can always amuse yourself, and do not let the foolish world disturb you. Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 30, 1780.

I AM sorry, my dear Sir, that you should be so humble with me your ancient friend, and to whom you have ever been so liberal, as to make an apology for desiring me to grant the request of another person. I am not less sorry that I shall not, I fear, be able to comply with it; and you must have the patience to hear my reasons. The first edition of the *Anecdotes* was of three hundred, of the two first volumes; and of

¹ The Hon. Daines Barrington, fourth son of John first Viscount Barrington, second Justice of Chester, and author of “*Observations on the Statutes*,” &c. He was eminent in natural history, and in several branches of literature; and died in 1800.—E.

as many of the third volume, and of the volume of Engravers. Then there was an edition of three hundred of all four. Unluckily I did not keep any number back of the two first volumes, and literally have none but those I reserved for myself. Of the other two I have two or three; and, I believe, I have a first, but without the cuts. If I can, with some odd volumes that I kept for corrections, make out a decent set, the library of the University shall have them; but you must not promise them, lest I should not be able to perform.

Of my new fourth volume I printed six hundred; but as they *can* be had, I believe not a third part is sold. This is a very plain lesson to me, that my editions sell for their curiosity, and not for any merit in them: and so they would if I printed Mother Goose's Tales, and but a few. As my Anecdotes of Painting have been published at such distant periods, and in three divisions, complete sets will be seldom seen; so, if I am humbled as an author, I may be vain as a printer; and, when one has nothing else to be vain of, it is certainly very little worth while to be proud of that.

I will now trust you with a secret, but beg Mr. Gough may not know it, for he will print it directly. Though I forgot Alma Mater, I have not forgotten my Almæ Nutrices, wet or dry, I mean Eton and King's. I have laid aside for them, and left them in my will, as complete a set as I could, of all I have printed. A few I did give them at first; but I have for neither a perfect set of the Anecdotes, I mean not the two first volumes. I should be much obliged to you, if, without naming me, you could inform yourself if I did send to King's those two first volumes — I believe not.

I will now explain what I said above of Mr. Gough. He has learnt, I suppose from my engravers, that I have had some views of Strawberry-hill engraved. Slap-dash, down it went, and he has even specified each view in his second volume. This curiosity is a little impertinent; but he has made me some amends by a new blunder, for he says they are engraved for a second edition of my Catalogue. Now I have certainly printed but one edition, for which the prints are designed. He says truly, that I printed but a few for use; consequently, I

by no means wished the whole world should know it; but he is very silly, and so I will say no more about him. Dr. Lort called yesterday, and asked if I had any message for you; but I had written too lately.

Mr. Pennant has been, as I think I told you, in town: by this time I conclude he is, as Lady Townley says of fifty pounds, all over the kingdom. When Dr. Lort returns, I shall be very glad to read your transcript of Wolsey's Letters; *for*, in your hand, I *can* read them. I will not have them but by some very safe conveyance, and will return them with equal care.

I can have no objection to Robin Masters being wooden-head of the Antiquarian Society; but, I suppose, he is not dignified enough for them. I should prefer the Judge too, because a coif makes him more like an old woman, and I reckon that Society the midwives of superannuated miscarriages. I am grieved for the return of your head-aches — I doubt you write too much. Yours most sincerely.

P. S. It will be civil to tell Dr. Farmer that I do not know whether I can obey his commands; but that I will if I can. As to a distinguished place, I beg not to be preferred to much better authors; nay, the more conspicuous, the more likely to be stolen for the reasons I have given you, of there being few complete sets, and true collectors are mighty apt to steal.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.¹

Dec. 11, 1780.

I SHOULD have been shamefully ungrateful, Sir, if I could ever forget all the favours I have received from you, and had omitted any mark of respect to you that it was in my power to show. Indeed, what you are so good as to thank me for was a poor trifle, but it was all I had or shall have of the kind. It was imperfect too, as some painters of name have died since it was printed, which was nine years ago. They will be added with your kind notices, should I live,

¹ Now first collected.

which is not probable, to see a new edition wanted. Sixty-three years, and a great deal of illness, are too speaking mementos not to be attended to; and when the public has been more indulgent than one had any right to expect, it is not decent to load it with one's dotage!

I believe, Sir, that I may have been over-candid to Hogarth, and that his spirit and youth and talent may have hurried him into more real caricatures than I specified; yet he certainly restrained his bent that way pretty early. Charteris¹ I have seen; but though some years older than you, Sir, I cannot say I have at all a perfect idea of him: nor did I ever hear the curious anecdote you tell me of the banker and my father. I was much better acquainted with Archbishop Blackbourne. He lived within two doors of my father in Downing-street, and took much notice of me when I was near man. It is not to be ungrateful and asperse him, but to amuse you, if I give you some account of him from what I remember.² He was perfectly a fine gentleman to the last, to eighty-four; his favourite author was Waller, whom he frequently quoted. In point of decorum, he was not quite so exact as you have been told, Sir. I often dined with him, his mistress, Mrs. Conwys, sat at the head of the table, and Hayter,³ his natural son by another woman, and very like him, at the bottom, as chaplain: he was afterwards Bishop of London. I have heard, but do not affirm it, that Mrs. Blackbourne, before she died, complained of Mrs. Conwys being brought under the same roof. To his clergy he was, I have heard, very imperious.

¹ The notorious Colonel Francis Charteris, to whom Hogarth has accorded a conspicuous place in the first plate of his *Harlot's Progress*. Pope describes him as "a man infamous for all manner of vices," and thus introduces him into his third *Moral Essay*:—

" Riches in effect,
No grace of Heav'n, or token of th' Elect;
Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the devil!"

He died in Scotland, in 1731, at the age of sixty-two. The populace, at his funeral, raised a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it.—E.

² See the note to vol. i. p. 267.—E.

³ For a refutation of Walpole's assertion, that Bishop Hayter was a natural son of Archbishop Blackbourn's, see vol. ii. p. 383.—E.

One story I recollect, which showed how much he was a man of this world; and which the Queen herself repeated to my father. On the King's last journey to Hanover, before Lady Yarmouth came over, the Archbishop being with her Majesty, said to her, "Madam, I have been with your minister Walpole, and he tells me that you are a wise woman, and do not mind your husband's having a mistress." He was a little hurt at not being raised to Canterbury on Wake's death, and said to my father, "You did not think on me; but it is true, I am too old, I am too old." Perhaps, Sir, these are gossiping stories, but at least they hurt nobody now.

I can say little, Sir, for my stupidity or forgetfulness about Hogarth's poetry, which I still am not sure I ever heard, though I knew him so well; but it is an additional argument for my distrusting myself, if my memory fails, which is very possible. A whole volume of Richardson's poetry has been published since my volume was printed, not much to the honour of his muse, but exceedingly so to that of his piety and amiable heart. You will be pleased, too, Sir, with a story Lord Chesterfield told me (too late too) of Jervas, who piqued himself on the reverse, on total infidelity. One day that he had talked very indecently in that strain, Dr. Arbuthnot, who was as devout as Richardson, said to him, "Come, Jervas, this is all an air and affectation; nobody is a sounder believer than you." "I!" said Jervas, "I believe nothing." "Yes, but you do," replied the Doctor; "nay, you not only believe, but practise: you are so scrupulous an observer of the commandments, that you never make the likeness of anything that is in heaven, or on the earth beneath, or," &c.

I fear, Sir, this letter is too long for thanks, and that I have been proving what I have said, of my growing superannuated; but, having made my will in my last volume, you may look on this as a codicil.

P. S. I had sealed my letter, Sir, but break it open, lest you should think soon, that I do not know what I say, or break my resolution lightly. I shall be able to send you in about two months a very curious work that I am going to print, and is actually in the press; but there is not a syllable

of my writing in it. It is a discovery just made of two very ancient manuscripts, copies of which were found in two or three libraries in Germany, and of which there are more complete manuscripts at Cambridge. They are of the eleventh century at lowest, and prove that painting in oil was then known, above three hundred years before the pretended invention of Van Eyck. The manuscripts themselves will be printed, with a full introductory Dissertation by the discoverer, Mr. Raspe, a very learned German, formerly librarian to the Landgrave of Hesse, and who writes English surprisingly well. The manuscripts are in the most barbarous monkish Latin, and are much such works as our booksellers publish of receipts for mixing colours, varnishes, &c. One of the authors, who calls himself Theophilus, was a monk; the other, Heraclius, is totally unknown; but the proofs are unquestionable. As my press is out of order, and that besides it would take up too much time to print them there, they will be printed here at my expence, and if there is any surplus, it will be for Raspe's benefit.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 19, 1780.

I CANNOT leave you for a moment in error, my good Sir, when you transfer a compliment to me, to which I have not the most slender claim, and defraud another of it to whom it is due.

The friend of Mr. Gray, in whom authorship caused no jealousy or variance, as Mr. Mainwaring says truly, is Mr. Mason. *I* certainly never excelled in poetry, and never attempted the species of poetry alluded to, odes. Dr. Lort, I suppose, is removing to a living or a prebend, at least; I hope so. He may run a risk if he carries his book to Lambeth. “*Sono sonate venti tre ore e mezza,*” as Alexander VIII. said to his nephew, when he was chosen Pope in extreme old age. My Lord of Canterbury's is not extreme, but very tottering. I found in Mr. Gough's new edition, that in the Pepysian li-

brary is a view of the theatre in Dorset Gardens, and views of four or five other ancient great mansions. Do the folk of Magdalen ever suffer copies of such things to be taken? If they would, is there anybody at Cambridge that could execute them, and reasonably? Answer me quite at your leisure; and, also, what and by whom the altar-piece is, that Lord Carlisle has given to King's. I did not know he had been of our college. I have two or three plates of Strawberry more than those you mention; but my collections are so numerous, and from various causes my prints have been in such confusion, that at present I neither know where the plates or proofs are. I intend next summer to set about completing my plan of the Catalogue and its prints; and, when I have found any of the plates or proofs, you shall certainly have those you want. There are the two large views of the house, one of the cottage, one of the library, one of the front to the road, and the chimney-piece in the Holbein room. I think these are all that are finished — oh! yes, I believe the prior's garden; but I have not seen them these two years. I was so ill the summer before last, that I attended to nothing; the little I thought of in that way last summer, was to get out my last volume of the Anecdotes; now I have nothing to trouble myself about as an editor, and that not publicly, but to finish my Catalogue — and that will be awkwardly enough; for so many articles have been added to my collection since the description was made, that I must add them in the appendix, or reprint it; and, what is more inconvenient, the positions of many of the pictures have been changed; and so it will be a lame piece of work. Adieu, my dear Sir! Yours most cordially.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.¹

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1781.

YOUR favourable opinion of my father, Sir, is too flattering to me not to thank you for the satisfaction it gave me. Wit, I think, he had not naturally, though I am sure he had

¹ Now first published.

none from affectation, as simplicity was a predominant feature in his amiable composition; but he possessed that, perhaps, most true species of wit, which flows from experience and deep knowledge of mankind, and consequently had more in his later than in his earlier years; which is not common to a talent that generally flashes from spirits, though they alone cannot bestow it. When you was once before so good, Sir, as to suggest to me an attempt at writing my father's life, I probably made you one answer that I must repeat now, which is, that a son's encomiums would be attributed to partiality; and, with my deep devotion to his memory, I should ever suspect it in myself. But I will set my repugnance in a stronger light, by relating an anecdote not incurious. In the new edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, Dr. Kippis, the tinker of it, reflecting on my having called the former, *Vindictio Britannica*, or *Defence of Everybody*, *threatened* that when he should come to my father's life he would convince me that the new edition did not deserve that censure. I confess I thought this but an odd sort of historian equity, to reverse scripture and punish the sins of children upon their fathers! However, I said nothing. Soon after Dr. Kippis himself called on me, and in very gracious terms desired I would favour him with anecdotes of my father's life. This was descending a little from his censorial throne, but I took no notice; and only told him, that I was so persuaded of the fairness of my father's character, that I chose to trust it to the most unprejudiced hands; and that all I could consent to was, that when he shall have written it, if he would communicate it to me, I would point out to him any material facts, if I should find any, that were not truly noted. This was all I could contribute. Since that time I have seen in the second volume a very gross accusation of Sir Robert, at second or third hand, and to which the smallest attention must give a negative. Sir Robert is accused of having, out of spite, influenced the House of Commons to expel the late Lord Barrington for the notorious job of the Hamburg lottery.¹ Spite was not the ingredient most domineering in my father's character; but whatever has been

¹ See *antè*, p. 17.—E.

said of the corruption or servility of Houses of Commons, when was there one so prostitute, that it would have expelled one of their own members for a fraud *not proved*, to gratify the vengeance of the minister? and a minister must have been implacable indeed, and a House of Commons profligate indeed, to inflict such a stigma on an innocent man, because he had been attached to a rival predecessor of the minister. It is not less strange that the Hamburger's son should not have vindicated his parent's memory at the opportunity of the secret committee on Sir Robert, but should wait for a manuscript memorandum of Serjeant Skinner after the death of this last. I hope Sir Robert will have no such apologist !

I do not agree less with you, Sir, in your high opinion of King William. I think, and a far better judge, Sir Robert, thought that Prince one of the wisest men that ever lived. Your bon-mot of his was quite new to me. There are two or three passages in the Diary of the second Earl of Clarendon that always struck me as instances of wisdom and humour at once ; particularly his Majesty's reply to the lords who advised him (I think at Salisbury) to send away King James ; and his few words, after long patience, to that foolish lord himself, who harangued him on the observance of his declaration. Such traits, and several of Queen Anne (not equally deep) in the same journal, paint those Princes as characteristically as Lord Clarendon's able father would have drawn them. There are two letters in the "*Nugæ Antiquæ*" that exhibit as faithful pictures of Queen Elizabeth and James the First, by delineating them in their private life and unguarded hours.

You are much in the right, Sir, in laughing at those wise personages, who not only dug up the corpse of Edward the First, but *restored* Christian burial to his crown and robes. Methinks, had they deposited those regalia in the treasury of the church, they would have committed no sacrilege. I confess I have not quite so heinous an idea of sacrilege as Dr. Johnson. Of all kinds of robbery, that appears to me the lightest species which injures nobody. Dr. Johnson is so pious, that in his journey to your country, he flatters himself

that all his readers will join him in enjoying the destruction of two Dutch crews, who were swallowed up by the ocean after they had robbed a church.¹ I doubt that uncharitable anathema is more in the spirit of the Old Testament than of the New.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

January 3, 1781.

AFTER I had written my note to you last night, I called on * * * * *, who gave me the dismal account of Jamaica,² that you will see in the Gazette, and of the damage done to our shipping. Admiral Rowley is safe; but they are in apprehensions for Walsingham. He told me too what is not in the Gazette; that of the expedition against the Spanish settlements, not a single man survives! The papers to-day, I see, speak of great danger to Gibraltar.

Your brother repeated to me his great desire that you should publish your speech,³ as he told you. I do not conceive why *he* is so eager for it, for he professes total despair about America. It looks to me as if there was a wish of throwing the blame somewhere; but I profess I am too simple to dive into the objects of shades of intrigues: nor do I care about them. We shall be reduced to a miserable little island;

¹ The following are Johnson's words:—"The two churches of Elgin were stripped, and the lead was shipped to be sold in Holland: I hope every reader will rejoice, that this *cargo* of sacrilege was lost at sea."—E.

² On the 3rd of October occurred one of the most dreadful hurricanes ever experienced in the West Indies. In Jamaica, Savannah La Mar, with three hundred inhabitants, was utterly swept away by an irruption of the sea; and at Barbadoes, on the 10th, Bridge-town, the capital of the island, was almost levelled to the ground, and several thousands of the inhabitants perished.—E.

³ Introductory of a motion "for leave to bring in a bill for quieting the troubles that have for some time subsisted between Great Britain and America, and enabling his Majesty to send out commissioners with full power to treat with America for that purpose." The motion was negatived by 123 against 81. For the speech of General Conway, and a copy of his proposed bill, see *Parl. History*, vol. xxi. pp. 570. 588.—E.

and from a mighty empire sink into as insignificant a country as Denmark or Sardinia! When our trade and marine are gone, the latter of which we keep up by unnatural efforts, to which our debt will put a stop, we shall lose the East Indies as Portugal did; and then France will dictate to us more imperiously than ever we did to Ireland, which is in a manner already gone too! These are mortifying reflections, to which an English mind cannot easily accommodate itself. But, alas! we have been pursuing the very conduct that France would have prescribed, and more than with all her presumption she could have dared to expect. Could she flatter herself that we would take no advantage of the dilatoriness and unwillingness of Spain to enter into the war? that we would reject the disposition of Russia to support us? and that our still more natural friend, Holland,¹ would be driven into the league against us? All this has happened; and, like an infant, we are delighted with having set our own frock in a blaze! I sit and gaze with astonishment at our phrenzy. Yet why? Are not nations as liable to intoxication as individuals? Are not predictions founded on calculation oftener rejected than the prophecies of dreamers? Do we not act precisely like Charles Fox, who thought he had discovered a new truth in figures, when he preached that wise doctrine, that nobody could want money that would pay enough for it? The consequence was, that in two years he left himself without the possibility of borrowing a shilling. I am not surprised at the spirits of a boy of parts; I am not surprised at the people; I do wonder at government, that games away its consequence. For what are we now really at war with America, France, Spain, and Holland?—Not with hopes of reconquering America; not with the smallest prospect of conquering a foot of land from

¹ Mr. Henry Lawrens, president of the American council, having been taken by one of the King's frigates early in October 1780, on his passage to Holland, and it being discovered by the papers in his possession that the American States had been long carrying on a secret correspondence with Amsterdam, Sir Joseph Yorke, the British minister at the Hague, demanded a satisfactory explanation; but the same not being afforded, hostilities against Holland were declared on the 28th of December 1780.—E.

France, Spain, or Holland.—No; we are at war on the defensive, to protect what is left, or more truly to stave off, for a year perhaps, a peace that must proclaim our nakedness and impotence. I would not willingly recur to that womanish vision of, something may turn up in our favour! That something must be a naval victory that will annihilate at once all the squadrons of Europe—must wipe off forty millions of new debt—reconcile the affections of America, that for six years we have laboured to alienate; and that must recall out of the grave the armies and sailors that are perished—and that must make thirteen provinces willing to receive the law, without the necessity of keeping ten thousand men amongst them. The gigantic imagination of Lord Chatham would not entertain such a chimera. Lord * * * * perhaps would say he did, rather than not undertake; or Mr. Burke could form a metaphoric vision that would satisfy no imagination but his own: but I, who am *nullius addictus jurare in verba*, have no hopes either in our resources or in our geniuses, and look on my country already as undone! It is grievous—but I shall not have much time to lament its fall!¹

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 7, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I WILL not leave you a moment in suspense about the safety of your very valuable volume, which you have so kindly sent me, and which I have just received, with the enclosed letters, and your other yesterday. I have not time to add a word more at present, being full of business, having the

¹ To this passage the editor of Walpole's works subjoined, in March 1798, the following note:—"It may be some comfort, in a moment no less portentous and melancholy than the one here described, to recollect the almost unhopèd-for recovery of national prosperity, which took place from the peace of 1782 to the declaration of war against France in the year 1793. May our exertions procure the speedy application of a similar remedy to our present evils, and may that remedy be productive of equally good effects!"—E.

night before last received an account of Lady Orford's death at Pisa,¹ and a copy of her will, which obliges me to write several letters, and to see my relations. She has left everything in her power to her *friend* Cavalier Mozzi, at Florence; but her son comes into a large estate, besides her great jointure. You may imagine, how I lament that he had not patience to wait sixteen months, before he sold his pictures!

I am very sorry you have been at all indisposed. I will take the utmost care of your fifty-ninth volume (for which I give you this receipt), and will restore it the instant I have had time to go through it. Witness my hand.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

February 9, 1781.

I HAD not time, dear Sir, when I wrote last, to answer your letter, nor do more than cast an eye on your manuscript. To say the truth, my patience is not tough enough to go through Wolsey's negotiations. I see that *your* perseverance was forced to make the utmost efforts to transcribe them. They are immeasurably verbose, not to mention the blunders of the first copyist. As I read only for amusement, I cannot, so late in my life, purchase information on what I do not much care about, at the price of a great deal of *ennui*. The old wills at the end of your volume diverted me much more than the obsolete politics. I shall say nothing about what you call *your old leaven*. Everybody must judge for himself in those matters: nor are you or I of an age to change long-formed opinions, as neither of us is governed by self-interest. Pray tell me how I may most safely return your volume. I value all your manuscripts so much, that I should never forgive myself, if a single one came to any accident, by your so obligingly lending them to me. They are great treasures, and contain something or other that must suit most tastes: not to mention your amazing industry, neatness, legibility,

¹ See vol. i. p. 170.—E.

with notes, arms, &c. — I know no such repositories. You will receive with your manuscript Mr. Kerrick's and Mr. Gough's letters. The former is very kind. The inauguration of the *Antiquated* Society is burlesque — and so is their dearth of materials for another volume: can they ever want such rubbish as compose their preceding annals?

I think it probable, that *story* should be *stone*: however, I never piqued myself on recording every mason. I have preserved but too many that did not deserve to be mentioned. I dare to say, that when I am gone, many more such will be added to my volumes. I had not heard of poor Mr. Pennant's misfortune. I am very sorry for it, for I believe him to be a very honest good-natured man. He certainly was too lively for his proportion of understanding, and too impetuous to make the best use of what he had. However, it is a credit to us antiquaries to have one of our class disordered by vivacity. I hope your goutiness is dissipated, and that this last fine week has set you on your feet again.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.¹

Berkeley Square, Feb. 10, 1781.

I WAS honoured yesterday with your lordship's card, with the notification of the additional honour of my being elected an honorary member of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland;² a grace, my lord, that I receive with the respect and gratitude due to so valuable a distinction; and for which I must beg leave, through your lordship's favour, to offer my most sincere and humble thanks to that learned and respectable Society.

My very particular thanks are still more due to your lordship, who, in remembrance of ancient partiality, have been pleased, at the hazard of your own judgment, to favour an old

¹ Now first printed.

² The Royal Society of Antiquaries of Scotland had been formed at Edinburgh in the preceding December, when the Earl of Buchan was elected president.—E.

humble servant, who can only receive honour from, but can reflect none on, the Society into which your lordship and your associates have condescended to adopt him. In my best days, my lord, I never could pretend to more than having flitted over some flowers of knowledge. Now worn out and near the end of my course, I can only be a broken monument to prove that the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland are zealous to preserve even the least valuable remains of a former age, and to recompense all who have contributed their mite towards illustrating our common island. I am, &c.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.¹

Strawberry Hill, Feb. 10, 1781.

I WAS very intimate, Sir, with the last Lord Finlater when he was Lord Deskford. We became acquainted at Rome on our travels, and though, during his illness and long residence in Scotland, we had no intercourse, I had the honour of seeing him sometimes during his last visit to England; but I am an entire stranger to the anecdote relative to my father and Sir William Windham. I have asked my brother, who was much more conversant in the scenes of that time; for I was abroad when Sir William died, and returned to England but about six months before my father's retirement, so that having been at school and at Cambridge, or in my infancy, during Sir Robert's administration, the little I retain from him was picked up in the last three years of his life, which is an answer, Sir, to your inquiries why, among other reasons, I have always declined writing his life; for I could in reality say but little on my own knowledge; and yet should have the air of being good authority, at least better than I should truly be. My brother, Sir Edward, who is eleven years older than I am, never heard of your anecdote. I may add, that latterly I lived in great intimacy with the Marchioness of Blandford, Sir William's widow, who died

¹ Now first collected.

but a year and a half ago at Sheene, here in my neighbourhood; and with Lady Suffolk, who could not but be well acquainted with the history of those times from her long residence at court, and with whom, for the last five or six years of her life here at Twickenham, I have had many and many long conversations on those subjects, and yet I never heard a word of the supposed event you mention. I myself never heard Sir W. Windham speak but once in the House of Commons, but have always been told that his style and behaviour were most liberal and like a gentleman; and my brother says, there never passed any bitterness or acrimony between him and our father.¹

I will answer you as fairly and candidly, Sir, about Archibald Duke of Argyll, of whom I *saw* at least a great deal. I do believe Sir Robert had a full opinion of his abilities as a most useful man. In fact, it is plain he had; for he depended on the Duke, when Lord Islay, for the management of your part of the island, and, as I have heard at the time, disobliged the most firm of the Scottish Whigs by that preference. Sir Robert supported Lord Islay against the Queen herself, who hated him for his attachment to Lady Suffolk; and he was the only man of any consequence whom her Majesty did not make feel how injudicious it was (however novel) to prefer the interest of the mistress to that of the wife. On my father's defeat his warm friends loudly complained of Lord Islay as having betrayed the Scottish boroughs, at the election of Sir Robert's last Parliament, to his brother, Duke John. It is true too, that Sir Robert always replied, "I do not accuse him." I must own, knowing my father's man-

¹ Pope, in his second Dialogue for the Year 1738, has transmitted Sir William's character to posterity—

"How can I, Pult'ney, Chesterfield, forget,
While Roman spirit charms, and Attic wit?
Or Wyndham, just to freedom and the throne,
The master of our passions and his own?"

Speaker Onslow says, "there was a spirit and power in his speaking that always animated himself and his hearers, and with the decoration of his manner, which was, indeed, very ornamental, produced, not only the most attentive, respectful, but even a reverend regard, to whatever he spoke."—E.

ner, and that when he said but little, it was *not* a favourable symptom, I did think, that if he *would* not accuse, at least he did not acquit. Duke Archibald was undoubtedly a dark shrewd man. I recollect an instance, for which I should not chuse to be quoted just at this moment, though it reflects on nobody living. I forget the precise period, and even some of the persons concerned; but it was in the minority of the present Duke of Gordon, and you, Sir, can probably adjust the dates. A regiment had been raised of Gordons. Duke Archibald desired the command of it to a favourite of his own. The Duchess-dowager insisted on it for her second husband. Duke A. said, "Oh! to be sure her grace must be obeyed;" but instantly got the regiment ordered to the East Indies, which had not been the reckoning of a widow remarried to a young fellow.¹

At the time of the rebellion, I remember that Duke Archibald was exceedingly censured in London for coming thither, and pleading that he was not empowered to take up arms. But I believe I have more than satisfied your curiosity, Sir, and that you will not think it very prudent to set an old man on talking of the days of his youth.

I have just received the favour of a letter from Lord Buchan, in which his lordship is so good as to acquaint me with the honour your new Society of Antiquarians have done me in nominating me an honorary member. I am certainly much flattered by the distinction, but am afraid his lordship's partiality and patronage will in this only instance do him no credit. My knowledge even of British antiquity has ever been desultory and most superficial; I have never studied any branch of science deeply and solidly, nor ever but for tem-

¹ See Memoires of George the Second, vol. i. p. 240. "In his private life," says Walpole, "he had more merit, except in the case of his wife, whom, having been deluded into marrying without a fortune, he punished by rigorous and unrelaxed confinement in Scotland. He had a great thirst for books; a head admirably turned to mechanics; was a patron of ingenious men, a promoter of discoveries, and one of the first great encouragers of planting in England; most of the curious exotics which have been familiarized to this climate being introduced by him. He died suddenly in his chair after dinner, at his house in Argyle-buildings, London, April 15, 1761."—E.

porary amusement, and without any system, suite, or method. Of late years I have quitted every connection with societies, not only Parliament, but those of our Antiquaries and of Arts and Sciences, and have not attended the meetings of the Royal Society. I have withdrawn myself in a great measure from the world, and live in a very narrow circle idly and obscurely. Still, Sir, I could not decline the honour your Society has been pleased to offer me, lest it should be thought a want of respect and gratitude, instead of a mark of humility and conscious unworthiness. I am so sensible of this last, that I cannot presume to offer my services in this part of our island to so respectable an assembly; but if you, Sir, who know too well my limited abilities, can at any time point out any information that is in my power to give to the Society, (as in the case of Royal Scottish portraits, on which Lord Buchan was pleased to consult me,) I shall be very proud to obey your and their commands, and shall always be with great regard their and your most obedient humble servant.

P. S. I do not know whether I ever mentioned to you or Lord Buchan, Sir, a curious and excellent head in oil of the Lady Margaret Douglas at Mr. Carteret's, at Hawnes in Bedfordshire, the seat of his grandfather Lord Granville; I know few better portraits. It is at once a countenance of goodness and cunning, a mixture I think pleasing. It seems to imply that the person's virtue was not founded on folly or ignorance of the world; it implies perhaps more, that the person would combat treachery and knavery, and knew how. I could fancy the head in question was such a character as Margaret Queen of Navarre, sister of Francis the First, who was very free in her conversation and writings, yet strictly virtuous; debonnaire, void of ambition; yet a politician when her brother's situation required it. If your Society should give into engraving historic portraits, this head would deserve an early place. There is at Lord Scarborough's, in Yorkshire, a double portrait, perhaps by Holbein or Lucas de Heere, of Lady Margaret's mother, Queen Margaret, and her second husband.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Berkeley Square, March 2, 1781.

MY Lady Orford ordered herself to be buried at Leghorn, the only place in Tuscany where Protestants have burial; therefore I suppose she did not affect to change. On the contrary, I believe she had no preference for any *sect*, but rather laughed at all. I know nothing new, neither in novelty nor antiquity. I have had no gout this winter, and therefore I call it my *leap-year*. I am sorry it is not yours too. It is an age since I saw Dr. Lort. I hope illness is not the cause. You will be diverted with hearing that I am chosen an honorary member of the new Antiquarian Society at Edinburgh. I accepted for two reasons: first, it is a feather that does not demand my flying thither; and secondly, to show contempt for our own old fools.¹ To me it will be a perfect sinecure; for I have moulted all my pen feathers, and shall have no ambition of nestling into their printed transactions. Adieu, my good Sir. Your much obliged.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

March 5, 1781.

I do not in the least guess or imagine what you mean by Lord Hardwicke's publication of a *Walpoliana*.² Naturally it should mean a collection of sayings or anecdotes of my father, according to the French '*Anas*, which began, I think, with those of Menage. Or, is it a collection of letters and state-papers during his administration? I own I am curious to know at least what this piece contains. I had not heard

¹ Cole, in a letter to Mr. Gough, acquainting him with Walpole's election, adds—"The admission of a few things into our Archæologia, has, I fear, estranged for ever one of the most lively, learned, and entertaining members on our list."—E.

² "Walpoliana; or a few Anecdotes of Sir Robert Walpole"—an agreeable little collection of anecdotes relative to Sir Robert Walpole, made by Philip second Earl of Hardwicke; printed in quarto, but never published.—E.

a word of it; and, were it not for the name, I should have very little inquisitiveness about it: for nothing upon earth ever was duller than the three heavy tomes his lordship printed of Sir Dudley Carleton's Negotiations, and of what he called State-papers. Pray send me an answer as soon as you can, at least of as much as you have heard about this thing.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, March 29, 1781.

YOU are so good-natured that I am sure you will be glad to be told that the report of Mr. Pennant being disordered is not true. He is come to town — has been with me, and at least is as composed as ever I saw him. He is going to publish another part of his Welch Tour, which he can well afford; though I believe he does not lose by his works. An aunt is dead exceedingly rich, who had given some thousands to him and his daughter, but suddenly changed her mind and left all to his sister, who has most nobly given him all that had been destined in the cancelled will. Dr. Nash has just published the first volume of his Worcestershire. It is a folio of prodigious corpulence, and yet dry enough; but then it is finely dressed, and has many heads and views.¹ Dr. Lort was with me yesterday, and I never saw him better, nor has he been much out of order. I hope your gout has left you; but here are winds bitter enough to give one anything. Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

April 3, 1781.

I AM very sorry, dear Sir, that, in my last letter but one, I took no notice of what you said about Lord Hardwicke;

¹ Dr. Threadway Nash's "Collections for the History of Worcestershire;" 1781-1799; in two volumes, folio.—E.

the truth was, I am perfectly indifferent about what he prints or publishes. There is generally a little indirect malice, but so much more dullness, that the latter soon suffocates the former. This is telling you that I could not be offended at anything you said of him, nor am I likely to suspect a sincere friend of disobliging me. You have proved the direct contrary these forty years. I have not time to say more, but am ever most truly yours.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, May 4, 1781.

I SHALL not only be ready to show Strawberry Hill, at any time he chooses, to Dr. Farmer, as your friend, but to be honoured with his acquaintance, though I am very shy now of contracting new. I have great respect for his character and abilities and judicious taste, and am very clear that he has elucidated Shakspeare¹ in a more reasonable and satisfactory manner than any of his affected commentators, who only complimented him with learning that he had not, in order to display their own.

Pray give me timely notice whenever I am likely to see Dr. Farmer, that I may not be out of the way when I can have an opportunity of showing attention to a friend of yours, and pay a small part of your gratitude to him. There shall be a bed at his service; for you know Strawberry cannot be seen in a moment, nor are Englishmen so *liants* as to get acquainted in the time they are walking through a house.

But now, my good Sir, how could you suffer your prejudiced partiality to me to run away with you so extravagantly, as to call me one of the greatest characters of the age? You are too honest to flatter, too much a hermit to be interested, and I am too powerless and insignificant to be an object of court, were you capable of paying it from mercenary views. I know then that it could proceed from nothing but the

¹ In his well-known "Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare."—E.

warmth of your heart; but if you are blind towards me, I am not so to myself. I know not how others feel on such occasions, but if any one happens to praise me, all my faults rush into my face, and make me turn my eyes inward and outward with horror. What am I but a poor old skeleton tottering towards the grave, and conscious of ten thousand weaknesses, follies, and worse! And for talents, what are mine, but trifling and superficial; and, compared with those of men of real genius, most diminutive! Mine a great character! Mercy on me! I am a composition of Anthony Wood and Madame Danois,¹ and I know not what trumpery writers. This is the least I can say to refute your panegyric, which I shall burn presently; for I will not have such an encomiastic letter found in my possession, lest I should seem to have been pleased with it. I enjoin you, as a penance, not to contradict one tittle I have said here; for I am not begging more compliments, and shall take it seriously ill if you ever pay me another. We have been friends above forty years; I am satisfied of your sincerity and affection; but does it become us, at past threescore each, to be saying fine things to one another? Consider how soon we shall both be nothing!

I assure you, with great truth, I am at this present very sick of my little vapour of fame. My tragedy has wandered into the hands of some banditti booksellers, and I am forced to publish it myself to prevent piracy.² All I can do is to condemn it myself, and that I shall. I am reading Mr. Pen-
nant's new Welch Tour; he has pleased me by making very handsome mention of you; but I will not do what I have been blaming.

My poor dear Madame du Deffand's little dog is arrived. She made me promise to take care of it the last time I saw her: that I will most religiously, and make it as happy as

¹ Madame d'Aulnoy, the contemporary of Perrault, and, like him, a writer of fairy tales. She was the authoress of "The Lady's Travels in Spain," and many other works, which have been translated into English.—E.

² Walpole had printed fifty copies of "The Mysterious Mother" at Strawberry Hill as early as the year 1765; but a surreptitious edition of it being announced in 1781, he consented to Dodsley's publishing a genuine one.—E.

is possible.¹ I have not much curiosity to see your Cambridge Raphael, but great desire to see you, and will certainly this summer accept your invitation, which I take much kinder than your *great character*, though both flowed from the same friendship. Mine for you is exactly what it has been ever since you knew (and few men can boast so uninterrupted a friendship as yours and that of—)

H. W.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday evening, May 6, 1781.

I SUPPED with your Countess on Friday at Lord Frederick Campbell's, where I heard of the relief of Gibraltar by Darby. The Spanish fleet kept close in Cadiz: however, he lifted up his leg, and just squirted contempt on them. As he is disembarrassed of his transports, I suppose their ships will scramble on shore rather than fight. Well, I shall be perfectly content with our fleet coming back in a whole skin; it will be enough to have outquixoted Don Quixote's own nation. As I knew your Countess would write the next day, I waited till she was gone out of town and would not have much to tell you—not that I have either; and it is giving myself an air to pretend to know more at Twickenham than she can at Henley. Though it is a bitter north-east, I came hither to-day to look at my lilacs, though *à la glace*; and to get from pharaoh, for which there is a rage. I doted on it above thirty years ago; but it is not decent to sit up all night now with boys and girls. My nephew, Lord Cholmondeley, the banker *à la mode*, has been demolished. He and his

¹ In his reply to this letter, of the 7th of May, the worthy antiquary says—"I congratulate the little Parisian dog, that he has fallen into the hands of so humane a master. I have a little diminutive dog, Busy, full as great a favourite, and *never out of my lap*: I have already, in case of an accident, ensured it a refuge from starvation and ill-usage. It is the least we can do for poor harmless, shiftless, pampered animals that have amused us, and we have spoilt." A brother antiquary, on reading this passage, exclaimed, "How could Mr. Cole ever get through the transcript of a Bishop's Registry, or a Chartulary, with *Busy* never out of his lap!"—E.

associate, Sir Willoughby Aston, went early t'other night to Brookes's, before Charles Fox and Fitzpatrick, who keep a bank there, were come; but they soon arrived, attacked their rivals, broke their bank, and won above four thousand pounds. "There," said Fox, "so should all usurpers be served!" He did still better; for he sent for his tradesmen, and paid as far as the money would go. In the mornings he continues his war on Lord North, but cannot break *that* bank. The court has carried a secret committee for India affairs, and it is supposed that Rumbold is to be the sacrifice; but as he is near as rich as Lord Clive, I conclude he will escape by the same golden key.

I told you in my last that Tonton was arrived. I brought him this morning to take possession of his new villa, but his inauguration has not been at all pacific. As he has already found out that he may be as despotic as at Saint Joseph's, he began with exiling my beautiful little cat; upon which, however, we shall not quite agree. He then flew at one of my dogs,¹ who returned it by biting his foot till it bled, but was severely beaten for it. I immediately rung for Margaret,² to dress his foot; but in the midst of my tribulation could not keep my countenance; for she cried, "Poor little thing, he does not understand my language!" I hope she will not recollect too that he is a Papist!

Berkeley Square, Tuesday, May 8.

I came before dinner, and find your long letter of the 3rd. You have mistaken Tonton's sex, who is a cavalier, and a little of the *mousquetaire* still; but if I do not correct his vivacities, at least I shall not encourage them like my dear old friend.

You say nothing of your health; therefore, I trust it is quite re-established: my own is most flourishing for me.

¹ This does not quite accord with the favourable character given of Tonton by Madame du Deffand's secretary, Wyart, in a letter to Walpole:—"Je garderai," he says, "Tonton jusqu'au départ de M. Thomas Walpole; j'en ai le plus grand soin. Il est très doux; il ne mord personne; il n'était méchant qu'auprès de sa maîtresse."—E.

² Mr. Walpole's housekeeper.

They say the Parliament will rise by the birthday; not that it seems to be any grievance or confinement to anybody. I hope you will soon come and enjoy a quiet summer under the laurels of your own conscience. They are at least as spreading as anybody's else; and the soil will preserve their verdure for ever. Methinks we western powers might as well make peace, since we make war so clumsily. Yet I doubt the awkwardness of our enemies will not have brought down our stomach. Well, I wish for the sake of mankind there was an end of their sufferings! Even spectators are not amused—the whole war has passed like the riotous murmurs of the upper gallery before the play begins—they have pelted the candle-snuffers, the stage has been swept, the music has played, people have taken their places—but the deuce a bit of any performance!—And when folks go home, they will have seen nothing but a farce, that hast cost fifty times more than the best tragedy!

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, May 28, 1781.

THIS letter, like an embarkation, will not set out till it has gotten its complement; but I begin it, as I have just received your second letter. I wrote to you two days ago, and did not mean to complain; for you certainly cannot have variety of matter in your sequestered isle: and since you do not disdain trifling news, this good town, that furnishes nothing else, at least produces weeds, which shoot up in spite of the *Scotch thistles*, that have choked all good fruits. I do not know what Lady Craven designs to do with her play; I hope, act it only in private; for her other was murdered, and the audience did not exert the least gallantry to so pretty an authoress, though she gave them so fair an opportunity. For my own play, I was going to publish it in my own defence, as a spurious edition was advertised here, besides one in Ireland. My advertisement has overlaid the former for the present, and that tempts me to suppress mine,

as I have a thorough aversion to its appearance. Still, I think I shall produce it in the dead of summer, that it may be forgotten by winter; for I could not bear having it the subject of conversation in a full town. It is printed; so I can let it steal out in the midst of the first event that engrosses the public; and as it is not quite a novelty, I have no fear but it will be still-born, if it is twin with any babe that squalls and makes much noise.

At the same time with yours I received a letter from another cousin at Paris, who tells me Necker is on the verge, and in the postscript says, he has actually resigned. I heard so a few days ago; but this is a full confirmation. Do you remember a conversation at your house, at supper, in which a friend of yours spoke very unfavourably of Necker, and seemed to wish his fall? In my own opinion they are much in the wrong. It is true, Necker laboured with all his shoulders to restore their finances; yet I am persuaded that his attention to that great object made him clog all their military operations. They will pay dearer for money; but money they will have: nor is it so dear to them, for, when they have gotten it, they have only not to pay. A Monsieur Joly de Fleury is comptroller-general. I know nothing of him; but as they change so often, some able man will prove minister at last—and there they will have the advantage again.

Lord Cornwallis's courier, Mr. Broderick, is not yet arrived; so you are a little precipitate in thinking America so much nearer to being subdued, which you have often swallowed up as if you were a minister; and yet, methinks, that era has been so frequently put off, that I wonder you are not cured of being sanguine—or rather, of believing the magnificent lies that every trifling advantage gives birth to. If a quarter of the Americans had joined the Royalists, that have been said to join, all the colonies would not hold them. But, at least, they have been like the trick of kings and queens at cards; where one of two goes back every turn to fetch another. However, this is only for conversation for the moment. With such aversion to disputation, I have

no zeal for making converts to my own opinion, not even on points that touch me nearer.

Thursday, May 31.

If you see the papers, you will find that there was a warm debate yesterday on a fresh proposal from Hartley¹ for pacification with America; in which the ministers were roundly reproached with their boasts of the returning zeal of the colonies; and which, though it ought by their own accounts to be so much nearer complete, they could not maintain to be at all effectual; though even yesterday a report was revived of a second victory of Lord Cornwallis. This debate prevented another on the Marriage-bill, which Charles Fox wants to get repealed, and which he told me he was going to labour. I mention this from the circumstance of the moment when he told me so. I had been to see if Lady Ailesbury was come to town: as I came up St. James's-street, I saw a cart and porters at Charles's door; coppers and old chests of drawers loading. In short, his success at faro has awakened his host of creditors; but unless his bank had swelled to the size of the bank of England, it could not have yielded a sop a-piece for each. Epsom, too, had been unpropitious; and one creditor has actually seized and carried off his goods, which did not seem worth removing. As I returned full of this scene, whom should I find sauntering by my own door but Charles? He came up and talked to me at the coach-window, on the Marriage-bill,² with as much *sang-froid* as if he knew nothing of what had happened. I have no admiration for insensibility to one's own faults, especially when committed out of vanity. Perhaps the whole philosophy consisted in the commission. If *you* could have been as much to blame, the last thing you would bear well would be your own reflections. The more marvellous Fox's parts are, the more

¹ On the preceding day, Mr. Hartley had moved for leave to bring in a bill to invest the Crown with sufficient power to treat upon the means of restoring peace with the provinces of North America. It was negatived by 106 against 72.—E.

² On the 7th of June, Mr. Fox moved for leave to bring in a bill to amend the act of the 26th of George the Second, for preventing clandestine marriages. The bill passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords.—E.

one is provoked at his follies, which comfort so many rascals and blockheads, and make all that is admirable and amiable in him only matter of regret to those who like him as I do.

I did intend to settle at Strawberry on Sunday; but must return on Thursday, for a party made at Marlborough-house for Princess Amelia. I am continually tempted to retire entirely; and should, if I did not see how very unfit English tempers are for living quite out of the world. We grow abominably peevish and severe on others, if we are not constantly rubbed against and polished by them. I need not name friends and relations of yours and mine as instances. My prophecy on the short reign of faro is verified already. The bankers find that all the calculated advantages of the game do not balance pinchbeck *parolis* and debts of honourable women. The bankers, I think, might have had a previous and more generous reason, the very bad air of holding a bank: — but this country is as hardened against the *petite morale*, as against the greater. — What should I think of the world if I quitted it entirely?

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 3, 1781.

You know I have more philosophy about *you* than courage, yet for once I have been very brave. There was an article in the papers last week that said, a letter from Jersey mentioned apprehensions of being attacked by four thousand French. Do you know that I treated the paragraph with scorn? No, no; I am not afraid for your island, when you are at home in it, and have had time to fortify it, and have sufficient force. No, no; it will not be surprised when you are there, and when our fleet is returned, and Digby before Brest. However, with all my valour, I could not help going to your brother to ask a few questions; but he had heard of no such letter. The French would be foolish indeed if they ran their heads a third time against your rocks, when watched by the most vigilant of all governors. Your nephew

George¹ is arrived with the fleet: my door opened t'other morning; I looked towards the common horizon of heads, but was a foot and a half below any face. The handsomest giant in the world made but one step cross my room, and seizing my hand, gave it such a robust gripe that I squalled; for he crushed my poor chalk-stones to powder. When I had recovered from the pain of his friendly salute, I said, "It must be George Conway! and yet, is it possible? Why, it is not fifteen months ago since you was but six feet high!" In a word, he is within an inch of Robert and Edward, with larger limbs; almost as handsome as Hugh, with all the bloom of youth; and, in short, another of those comely sons of Anak, the breed of which your brother and Lady Hertford have piously restored for the comfort of the daughters of Sion. He is delighted with having tapped his warfare with the siege of Gibraltar, and burns to stride to America. The town, he says, is totally destroyed, and between two and three hundred persons were killed.—Well, it is pity Lady Hertford has done breeding: we shall want such a race to repeople even the ruins we do not lose! The rising generation does give one some hopes. I confine myself to some of this year's birds. The young William Pitt² has again displayed paternal oratory. The other day, on the commission of accounts, he answered Lord North, and tore him limb from limb. If

¹ Lord George Seymour Conway, seventh son of Francis, first Earl and Marquis of Hertford; born in 1763.—E.

² "The young William Pitt," afterwards, as Walpole anticipated, the proud rival of Charles Fox, and for so long a period the prime-minister of England, delivered his maiden speech in the House of Commons, on the 26th of February, in favour of Mr. Burke's bill for an economical reform in the civil list. "Never," says his preceptor, Bishop Tomline, "were higher expectations formed of any person upon his first coming into Parliament, and never were expectations more completely answered. They were, indeed, much more than answered; such were the fluency and accuracy of language, such the perspicuity of arrangement, and such the closeness of reasoning, and manly and dignified elocution,—generally, even in a much less degree, the fruits of long habit and experience,—that it could scarcely be believed to be the first speech of a young man not yet two-and-twenty. On the following day, knowing my anxiety upon every subject which related to him, Mr. Pitt, with his accustomed kindness, wrote to me at Cambridge, to inform me that 'he had heard his own voice in the House of Commons,' and modestly expressed his satisfaction at the manner in which his first attempt at parliamentary speaking had been received."—E.

Charles Fox could feel, one should think such a rival, with an unspotted character, would rouse him. What, if a Pitt and Fox should again be rivals! A still newer orator has appeared in the India business, a Mr. Bankes,¹ and against Lord North too; and with a merit that the very last crop of orators left out of their rubric—modesty. As young Pitt is modest too, one would hope some genuine English may revive!²

Tuesday, June 5.

This is the season of opening my cake-house. I have chosen a bad spot, if I meant to retire; and calculated ill, when I made it a puppet-show. Last week we had two or three mastiff-days; for they were fiercer than our common dog-days. It is cooled again; but rain is as great a rarity as in Egypt; and father Thames is so far from being a Nile, that he is dying for thirst himself. But it would be prudent to reserve paragraphs of weather till people are gone out of town; for then I can have little to send you else from hence.

Berkeley Square, June 6.

As soon as I came to town to-day Le Texier called on me, and told me he has miscarried of Pygmalion. The expense would have mounted to 150*l.* and he could get but sixty subscribers at a guinea a-piece. I am glad his experience and success have taught him thrift. I did not expect it. Sheridan had a heavier miscarriage last night. The two Vestris had imagined a fête; and, concluding that whatever they designed would captivate the town and its purses, were at the expense of 1200*l.* and, distributing tickets at two guineas a-piece, disposed of not two hundred. It ended in a bad opera, that be-

¹ Henry Bankes, Esq. of Kingston Hall. He represented Corfe-Castle from 1780 to 1826, and the county of Dorset from that time until 1831. In 1818, he published "The Civil and Constitutional History of Rome, from the Foundation to the Age of Augustus," in two volumes, 8vo; and died in 1834.—E.

² Mr. Wilberforce, in a letter to a friend, of the 9th of June, says—"The papers will have informed you how Mr. William Pitt, second son of the late Lord Chatham, has distinguished himself: he comes out as his father did, a ready-made orator, and I doubt not but that I shall, one day or other, see him the first man in the country." *Life*, vol. i. p. 22.—E.

gan three hours later than usual, and at quadruple the price. There were bushels of dead flowers, lamps, country-dances — and a cold supper. Yet they are not abused as poor Le Texier was last year.

June 8.

I conclude my letter, and I hope our present correspondence, very agreeably; for your brother told me last night, that you have written to Lord Hillsborough for leave to return. If all our governors could leave their dominions in as good plight, it were lucky. Your brother owned, what the Gazette with all its circumstances cannot conceal, that Lord Cornwallis's triumphs have but increased our losses, without leaving any hopes. I am told that his army, which when he parted from Clinton amounted to seventeen thousand men, does not now contain above as many hundred, except the detachments. The Gazette, to my sorrow and your greater sorrow, speaks of Colonel O'Hara having received two dangerous wounds. Princess Amelia was at Marlborough-house last night, and played at faro till twelve o'clock. There ends the winter campaign! I go to Strawberry-hill to-morrow; and I hope, *à l'Irlandaise*, that the next letter I write to you — will be not to write to you any more.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, June 13, 1781.

It was very kind, my dear lord, to recollect me so soon: I wish I could return it by amusing you; but here I know nothing, and suppose it is owing to age that even in town I do not find the transactions of the world very entertaining. One must sit up all night to see or hear anything; and if the town intends to do anything, they never begin to do it till next day. Mr. Conway will certainly be here the end of this month, having thoroughly secured his island from surprise, and it is not liable to be taken any other way. I wish he was governor of this bigger one too, which does not seem quite so well guaranteed.

Your lordship will wonder at a visit I had yesterday : it was from Mr. Storer, who has passed a day and night here. It was not from my being a fellow-scholar of Vestris, but from his being turned antiquary; the last passion I should have thought a macaroni would have taken. I am as proud of such a disciple as of having converted Dicky Bateman from a Chinese to a Goth. Though he was the founder of the Sha-rawadgi taste in England, I preached so effectually that his every pagoda took the veil. The Methodists say, one must have been very wicked before one can be of the elect — yet is that extreme more distant from *the ton*, which avows knowing and liking nothing but the fashion of the instant, to studying what were the modes of five hundred years ago? I hope this conversion will not ruin Mr. Storer's fortune under the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. How his Irish majesty will be shocked when he asks how large Prince Boothby's shoe-buckles are grown, to be answered, he does not know, but that Charles Brandon's cod-piece at the last birth-day had three yards of velvet in it! and that the Duchess of Buckingham thrust out her chin two inches farther than ever in admiration of it! and that the Marchioness of Dorset had put out her jaw by endeavouring to imitate her!

We have at last had some rains, which I hope extended to Yorkshire, and that your lordship has found Wentworth Castle in the bloom of verdure. I always, as in duty bound, wish prosperity to everybody and everything there, and am your lordship's ever devoted and grateful humble servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 16, 1781.

YOUR last account of yourself was so indifferent, that I am impatient for a better: pray send me a much better.

I know little in your way but that Sir Richard Worsley has just published a History of the Isle of Wight, with many

views poorly done enough.¹ Mr. Bull² is honouring me, at least my *Anecdotes of Painting*, exceedingly. He has let every page into a pompous sheet, and is adding every print of portrait, building, &c. that I mention, and that he can get, and specimens of all our engravers. It will make eight magnificent folios, and be a most valuable body of our arts. Nichols the printer has published a new *Life of Hogarth*,³ of near two hundred pages—many more, in truth, than it required: chiefly it is *the life* of his works, containing all the variations, and notices of any persons whom he had in view. I cannot say there are discoveries of many prints which I have not mentioned, though I hear Mr. Gulston⁴ says he has fifteen such; but I suppose he only fancies so. Mr. Nichols says our printsellers are already adding Hogarth's name to several spurious. Mr. Stevens, I hear, has been allowed to ransack Mrs. Hogarth's house for obsolete and unfinished plates, which are to be completed and published. Though she was not pleased with my account of her husband, and seems by these transactions to have encouraged the second, I assure you I have much more reason to be satisfied than she has, the editor or editors being much civiller to living me than to dead Hogarth—yet I should not have complained. Everybody has the same right to speak their sentiments. Nay, in general I have gentler treatment than I expected, and I think the world and I part good friends.

I am now setting about the completion of my *Ædes Strawberry-hill*. A painter is to come hither on Monday to make a drawing of the Tribune, and finish T. Sandby's fine view of the gallery, to which I could never get him to put the

¹ Sir Richard Worsley is better known by his splendid work, the "*Museum Worsleianum*; or, a Collection of antique Basso-relievos, Bustos, Statues, and Gems; with views of places in the Levant, taken on the spot, in the years 1785-6-7;" in two volumes, folio. Sir Richard sat many years in Parliament for the borough of Newport, and was governor of the Isle of Wight; where he died in 1805.—E.

² Richard Bull, Esq. a famous collector of portraits.—E.

³ "*Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth; and a Catalogue of his Works, chronologically arranged; with occasional Remarks.*"—E.

⁴ Joseph Gulston, Esq. also an eminent portrait collector.—E.

last hand. They will then be engraved with a few of the chimney-pieces, which will complete the plates. I must add an appendix of curiosities, purchased or acquired since the Catalogue was printed. This will be awkward, but I cannot afford to throw away an hundred copies. I shall take care if I can that Mr. Gough does not get fresh intelligence from my engravers, or he will advertize my supplement, before the book appears. I do not think it was very civil to publish such private intelligence, to which he had no right without my leave; but everybody seems to think he may do what is good in his own eyes. I saw the other day, in a collection of seats (exquisitely engraved), a very rude insult on the Duke of Devonshire. The designer went to draw a view of Chiswick, without asking leave, and was—not hindered, for he has given it; but he says he was treated *illiberally*, the house not being shown without tickets, which he not only censures, but calls a singularity, though a frequent practice in other places, and practised *there* to my knowledge for these thirty years: so everybody is to come into your house if he pleases, draw it whether you please or not, and by the same rule, I suppose, put anything into his pockets that he likes. I do know, by experience, what a grievance it is to have a house worth being seen, and though I submit in consequence to great inconveniences, they do not save me from many rudenesses. Mr. Southcote¹ was forced to shut up his garden, for the savages who came as connoisseurs scribbled a thousand brutalities, in the buildings, upon his religion. I myself, at Canons, saw a beautiful table of oriental alabaster that had been split in two by a buck in boots jumping up backwards to sit upon it.

I have placed the oaken head of Henry the Third over the middle arch of the armoury. Pray tell me what the church of Barnwell, near Oundle, was, which his Majesty endowed, and whence his head came. Dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely.

¹ Philip Southcote, Esq. of Wooburn Farm, Chertsey; one of the first places improved according to the principles of modern gardening.—E.

TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.¹

Strawberry Hill, July 1, 1781.

I HAVE been exceedingly flattered, my lord, by receiving a present from your lordship, which at once proves that I retain a place in your lordship's memory, and you think me worthy of reading what you like. I could not wait to give your lordship a thousand thanks for so kind a mark of your esteem till I had gone through the volume, which I may venture to say I shall admire, as I find it contains some pieces which I had seen, and did admire, without knowing their author. That approbation was quite impartial. Perhaps my future judgment of the rest will be not a little prejudiced, and yet on good foundation; for if Mr. Preston² has retained my suffrage in his favour by dedicating his poems to your lordship, it must at least be allowed that I am biassed by evidence of his taste. He would not possess the honour of your friendship unless he deserved it; and, as he knows you, he would not have ventured to prefix your name, my lord, to poems that did not deserve your patronage. I dare to say they will meet the approbation of better judges than I can pretend to be. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, esteem, and gratitude.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1781.

My good Sir, you forget that I have a cousin, eldest son of Lord Walpole, and of a marriageable age, who has the same Christian name as I. The Miss Churchill he has married is my niece, second daughter of my sister, Lady Mary

¹ Now first collected.

² William Preston, Esq. a young Irish gentleman, of whom Lord Charlemont had become the friend and patron. He afterwards published "Thoughts on Lyric Poetry, with an Ode to the Moon;" an "Essay on Ridicule, Wit, and Humour;" and a translation of the *Argonautics* of Appollonius Rhodius. He died in 1807.—E.

Churchill; so that if I were in my dotage, I must have looked out for another bride — in short, I hope you will have no occasion to wish me joy of any egregious folly. I do congratulate you on your better health, and on the Duke of Rutland's civilities to you. I am a little surprised at his brother, who is a seaman, having a propensity to divinity, and wonder you object to it; the church navigant would be an extension of its power. As to *orthodoxy*, excuse me if I think it means nothing at all but every man's own opinion. Were every man to define his faith, I am persuaded that no two men are or ever were exactly of the same opinion in *all* points; and as men are more angry at others for differing with them on a single point, than satisfied with their concurrence in all others, each would deem everybody else a heretic. Old or new opinions are exactly of the same authority, for every opinion must have been new when first started; and no man has nor ever had more right than another to dictate, unless inspired. St. Peter and St. Paul disagreed from the earliest time, and who can be sure which was in the right? and if one of the apostles was in the wrong, who may not be mistaken? When you will tell me which was the orthodox, and which the heterodox apostle, I will allow that you know what orthodoxy is.¹ You and I are perhaps the two persons who agree the best with very different ways of thinking; and perhaps the reason is, that we have a mutual esteem for each other's sincerity, and, from an experience of more than forty years, are persuaded that neither of us has any interested views.² For my own part, I confess honestly that I am far from having the same charity for those whom I suspect of mercenary views. If Dr. Butler, when a private clergyman, wrote Whig pamphlets, and when Bishop of Oxford preaches Tory sermons, I

¹ On Lord Sandwich's observing that he did not know the difference between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, Bishop Warburton is said to have replied, "Orthodoxy, my lord, is my doxy, and heterodoxy is another man's doxy."—E.

² Cole, in a letter to Mr. Gough, of the 10th of August, says—"Mr. Walpole and myself are as opposite in political matters as possible; yet we continue friends. Your political and religious opinions possibly may be as dissimilar; yet I hope we shall all meet in a better world, and be happy."—E.

should not tell him that he does not know what orthodoxy is, but I am convinced he does not care what it is. The Duke of Rutland seems much more liberal than Butler or I, when he is so civil to you, though you voted against his brother. I am not acquainted with his grace, but I respect his behaviour; he is above prejudices.

The story of poor Mr. Cotton¹ is shocking, whichever way it happened, but most probably it was accident.

I am ashamed at the price of my book, though not my fault; but I have so often been guilty myself of giving ridiculous prices for rarities, though of no intrinsic value, that I must not condemn the same folly in others. Everything tells me how silly I am! I pretend to reason, and yet am a virtuoso! Why should I presume that, at sixty-four, I am too wise to marry? and was you, who know so many of my weaknesses, in the wrong to suspect me of one more? Oh! no, my good friend: nor do I see anything in your belief of it, but the kindness with which you wish me felicity on the occasion. I heartily thank you for it, and am most cordially yours.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 26, 1781.

I WILL not delay thanking you, dear Sir, for a second letter, which you wrote out of kindness, though I have time but to say a word, having my house full of company. I think I have somewhere or other mentioned the “Robertus Commentarius,” (probably on some former information from you, which you never forget to give me,) at least the name sounds familiar to me; but just now I cannot consult my papers or books from the impediment of my guests. As I am actually preparing a new edition of my Anecdotes, I shall very soon have occasion to search. I am sorry to hear you complain of the gout, but trust it will be a short parenthesis.

Yours most gratefully.

¹ A son of Sir John Cotton, who was accidentally killed whilst shooting in his father's woods.—E.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 31, 1781.

YOUR lordship's too friendly partiality sees talents in me which I am sure I do not possess. With all my desire of amusing you, and with all my sense of gratitude for your long and unalterable goodness, it is quite impossible to send you an entertaining letter from hence. The insipidity of my life, that is passed with a few old people that are wearing out like myself, after surviving so many of my acquaintance, can furnish no matter of correspondence. What few novelties I hear, come stale, and not till they have been hashed in the newspapers; and though we are engaged in such big and wide wars, they produce no striking events, nor furnish anything but regrets for the lives and millions we fling away to no purpose! One cannot divert when one can only compute, nor extract entertainment from prophecies that there is no reason to colour favourably. We have, indeed, foretold success for seven years together, but debts and taxes have been the sole completion.

If one turns to private life, what is there to furnish pleasing topics? Dissipation, without object, pleasure, or genius, is the only colour of the times. One hears every day of somebody undone, but can we or they tell how, except when it is by the most expeditious of all means, gaming? And now, even the loss of an hundred thousand pounds is not rare enough to be surprising. One may stare or growl, but cannot relate anything that is worth hearing. I do not love to censure a younger age; but in good truth, they neither amuse me nor enable me to amuse others.

The pleasantest event I know happened to myself last Sunday morning, when General Conway very unexpectedly walked in as I was at breakfast, in his way to Park-place. He looks as well in health and spirits as ever I saw him; and though he stayed but half an hour, I was perfectly content, as he is at home.

I am glad your lordship likes the fourth book of *The Gar-*

den,¹ which is admirably coloured. The version of Fresnoy I think the finest translation I ever saw. It is a most beautiful poem, extracted from as dry and prosaic a parcel of verses as could be put together: Mr. Mason has gilded lead, and burnished it highly. Lord and Lady Harcourt I should think would make him a visit, and I hope, for their sakes, will visit Wentworth Castle. As they both have taste, I should be sorry they did not see the perfectest specimen of architecture I know.

Mrs. Damer certainly goes abroad this winter. I am glad of it for every reason but her absence. I am certain it will be essential to her health; and she has so eminently a classic genius, and is herself so superior an artist, that I enjoy the pleasure she will have in visiting Italy.

As your lordship has honoured all the productions of my press with your acceptance, I venture to enclose the last, which I printed to oblige the Lucans. There are many beautiful and poetic expressions in it. A wedding, to be sure, is neither a new nor a promising subject, nor will outlast the favours: still I think Mr. Jones's Ode² is uncommonly good for the occasion; at least, if it does not much charm Lady Strafford and your lordship, I know you will receive it kindly as a tribute from Strawberry Hill, as every homage is due to you both from its master. Your devoted servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 16, 1781.

I AM not surprised that such a mind as yours cannot help expressing gratitude: it would not be your mind, if it could command that sensation as triumphantly as it does your passions. Only remember that the expression is unnecessary. I do know that you feel the entire friendship I have for you;

¹ The fourth book of Mason's "English Garden" had just made its appearance.—E.

² Mr. afterwards Sir William, Jones's Ode on the marriage of Lord Althorp, afterwards Earl Spencer, with Miss Bingham.—E.

nor should I love you so well if I was not persuaded of it. There never was a grain of anything romantic in my friendship for you. We loved one another from children, and as so near relations; but my friendship grew up with your virtues, which I admired though I did not imitate. We had scarce one in common but disinterestedness. Of the reverse we have both, I may say, been so absolutely clear, that there is nothing so natural and easy as the little moneyed transactions between us; and therefore, knowing how perfectly indifferent I am upon that head, and remembering the papers I showed you, and what I said to you when I saw you last, I am sure you will have the complaisance never to mention thanks more.—Now, to answer your questions.

As to coming to you, as that *feu grégeois* Lord George Gordon has given up the election, to my great joy, I can come to you on Sunday next. It is true, I had rather you visited your regiment first, for this reason: I expect summons to Nuneham every day; and besides, having never loved two journeys instead of one, I grow more covetous of my time, as I have little left, and therefore had rather take Park-place, going and coming, on my way to Lord Harcourt.

I don't know a word of news, public or private. I am deep in my dear old friend's papers.¹ There are some very delectable; and though I believe, nay, know, I have not quite all, there are many which I almost wonder, after the little delicacy they² have shown, ever arrived to my hands. I dare to say they will not be quite so just to the public; for though I consented that the correspondence with Voltaire should be given to the editors of his works, I am persuaded that there are many passages at least which they will suppress, as very contemptuous to his chief votaries: I mean, of the votaries to his sentiments; for, like other heresiarchs, he despised his tools. If I live to see the edition, it will divert me to collate it with what I have in my hands.

You are the person in the world the fittest to encounter the

¹ Madame du Deffand, who died in September 1780, and left all her papers to Mr. Walpole. See *antè*, p. 93.—E.

² The executors of Madame du Deffand; whom Walpole suspected of having abstracted some of her papers.—E.

meeting you mention for the choice of a bridge.¹ You have temper and patience enough to bear with fools and false taste. I, so unlike you, have learned some patience with both sorts too, but by a more summary method than by waiting to instil reason into them. Mine is only by leaving them to their own vagaries, and by despairing that sense and taste should ever extend themselves. Adieu !

P. S. In Voltaire's letters are some bitter traits on the King of Prussia, which, as he is defender of their no-faith, I conclude will be *rayés* too.

TO JOHN NICHOLS, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 31, 1781.

I AM glad to hear, Sir, that your account of Hogarth calls for another edition; and I am very sensible of your great civility in offering to change any passages that criticise my own work. Though I am much obliged by the offer, I should blush to myself if I even wished for that complaisance. Good God ! Sir, what am I that I should be offended at or above criticism or correction ? I do not know who ought to be ; I am sure, no author. I am a private man, of no consequence, and at best an author of very moderate abilities. In a work that comprehends so much biography as my *Anecdotes of Painting*, it would have been impossible, even with much more diligence than I employed, not to make numberless mistakes. It is kind to me to point out those errors ; to the world it is justice. Nor have I reason to be displeased even with the manner. I do remember that in many passages you have been very civil to me. I do not recollect any harsh phrases. As my work is partly critical as well as biographic, there too I had no reason or right to expect deference to my opinions. Criticism, I doubt, has no very certain rule to go by ; in matters of taste it is a still more vague and arbitrary science.

As I am very sincere, Sir, in what I say, I will with the

¹ The bridge over the Thames at Henley, to the singular beauty of which the good taste of Mr. Conway materially contributed.

same integrity own, that in one or two places of your book I think the criticisms on me are not well founded. For instance; in p. 37 I am told that Hogarth did not deserve the compliment I pay him of not descending to the indelicacy of the Flemish and Dutch painters. It is very true that you have produced some instances, to which I had not adverted, where he has been guilty of the same fault, though I think not in all you allege, nor to the degree alleged: in some I think the humour compensates for the indelicacy, which is never the case with the Dutch; and in one particular I think it is a merit,—I mean in the burlesque Paul before Felix,—for there, Sir, you should recollect that Hogarth himself meant to satirize, not to imitate the painters of Holland and Flanders.

You have also instanced, Sir, many more portraits in his satiric prints than come within my defence of him as not being a personal satirist; but in those too, with submission, I think you have gone too far; as, though you have cited portraits, are they all satiric? Sir John Gouson is the image of an active magistrate identified; but it is not ridiculous, unless to be an active magistrate is being ridiculous. Mr. Pine,¹ I think you allow, desired to sit for the fat friar in the Gates of Calais—certainly not with a view to being turned into derision.

With regard to the bloody fingers of Sigismunda, you say, Sir, that my memory must have failed me, as you affirm that they *are* unstained with blood. Forgive me if I say that I am positive they were so originally. I saw them so, and have often mentioned that fact. Recollect, Sir, that you yourself allow, p. 46, in the note, that the picture was continually “altered, upon the criticism of one connoisseur or another.” May not my memory be more faithful about so striking a circumstance than the memory of another who would engage to recollect all the changes that remarkable picture underwent?

¹ John Pine the artist, who published “The Procession and Ceremonies at the Installation of the Knights of the Bath, 17th of June 1725;” folio, 1730; and, in 1739, “The Tapestry Hangings of the House of Lords,” &c. sat for the Fat Friar in Hogarth’s Gates of Calais, and received from that circumstance the name of “Friar Pine,” which he retained till his death.—E.

I should be very happy, Sir, if I could contribute any additional lights to your new publication; indeed, what additional lights I have gained are from your work, which has furnished me with many. I am going to publish a new edition of all the five volumes of my *Anecdotes of Painting*, in which I shall certainly insert what I have gathered from you. This edition will be in five thin octavos, without cuts, to make the purchase easy to artists and such as cannot afford the quartos, which are grown so extravagantly dear, that I am ashamed of it. Being published too at different periods, and being many of them cut to pieces for the heads, since the rage for portraits has been carried so far, it is very rare to meet with a complete set. My corrected copy is now in the printer's hands, except the last volume, in which are my additions to Hogarth from your list, and perhaps one or two more; but that volume also I have left in town, though not at the printer's, as, to complete it, I must wait for his new works, which Mrs. Hogarth is to publish. When I am settled in town, Sir, I shall be very ready, if you please to call on me in Berkeley-square, to communicate any additions I have made to my account of Hogarth.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Berkeley Square, Nov. 7, 1781.

YESTERDAY, Sir, I received the favour of your letter with the inclosed prologue,² and am extremely pleased with it; not only as it omits mention of me, for which I give you my warmest thanks, but as a composition. The thoughts are just and happily expressed; and the conclusion is so lively and well conceived, that Mr. Harris, to whom I carried it this morning, thinks it will have great effect. We are very sorry you have not sent us an epilogue too; but, before I touch on that, I will be more regular in my details. Miss Younge has accepted the part very gracefully; and by a letter I have re-

¹ Now first printed.

² To the tragedy of the Count of Narbonne. See *antè*, p. 69.—E.

ceived from her, in answer to mine, will, I flatter myself, take care to do justice to it. Nay, she is so zealous, that Mr. Harris tells me she has taken great pains with the young person who is to play the daughter, but whose name I cannot at this moment recollect.¹

I must now confess that I have been again alarmed. I had a message from Mr. Harris on Saturday last to tell me that the performers had been so alert, and were so ready with their parts, and the many disappointments that had happened this season had been so prejudicial to him, that it would be easy and necessary to bring out your play next Saturday the 10th, and desired to have the prologue and epilogue. This precipitation made me apprehend that justice would not be done to your tragedy. Still I did not dare to remonstrate; nor would venture to damp an ardour which I could not expect to excite again. Instead of objecting to his haste, I only said I had not received your prologue and epilogue, but had written for them and expected them every minute, though, as it depended on winds, one could never be sure. I trusted to accidents for delay; at least I thought I could contrive some, without seeming to combat what he thought for his interest.

I have not been mistaken. On receiving your prologue yesterday, I came to town to-day and carried it to him, to show him I lost no time. He told me Mr. Henderson was not enough recovered, but he hoped would be well enough to bring out the play on Saturday se'nnight. That he had had a rough rehearsal yesterday morning, with which he had been charmed; and was persuaded, and that the performers think so too, that your play will have great effect. All this made me very easy. There is to be a regular rehearsal on Saturday, for which I shall stay in town on purpose; and, if I find the performers perfect, I think there will be no objection to its appearance on Saturday se'nnight. I shall rather prefer that day to a later; as, the Parliament not being met, it will have a week's run before politics interfere.

¹ Miss Satchell.

Now, Sir, for the epilogue. I have taken the liberty of desiring Mr. Harris to have one prepared, in case yours should not arrive in time. It is a compliment to him, (I do not mean that he will write it himself,) will interest him still more in the cause; and, though he may not procure a very good one, a manager may know better than we do what will suit the taste of the times. The success of a play being previous, cannot be hurt by an epilogue, though some plays have been saved; and if it be not a good one, it will not affect you. If you send us a good one, though too late, it may be printed with the play.

I must act about the impression just the reverse of what I did about the performance, and must beg you would commission some friend to transact that affair; for I know nothing of the terms, and should probably disserve you if I undertook the treaty with the booksellers, nor should I have time to supervise the correction of the press. In truth, it is so disagreeable a business, that I doubt I have given proofs at my own press of being too negligent; and as I am actually at present reprinting my *Anecdotes of Painting*, I have but too much business of that sort on my hands. You will forgive my saying this, especially when you consider that my hands are very lame, and that this morning in Mr. Harris's room, the right one shook so, that I was forced to desire him to write a memorandum for me.

I think I have omitted nothing material. Mr. Wroughton is to play the Count. I do not know who will speak the prologue; probably not Mr. Henderson, as he has been so very ill: nor should I be very earnest for it; for the Friar's is so capital and so laborious a part, that I should not wish to abate his powers by any previous exertion. Perhaps I refine too much, but I own I think the non-appearance of a principal actor till his part opens is an advantage.

I will only add that I must beg you will not talk of obligations to me. You have at least overpaid me *d'avance* by the honour you have done me in adopting the *Castle of Otranto*.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 10, 1781.

As I have been at the rehearsal of your tragedy to-day, Sir, I must give you a short account of it; though I am little able to write, having a good deal of gout in my right hand, which would have kept me away from any thing else, and made me hurry back hither the moment it was over, lest I should be confined to town. Mr. Malone, perhaps, who was at the play-house too, may have anticipated me; for I could not save the post to-night, nor will this go till to-morrow.

Mr. Henderson is still too ill to attend, but hopes to be abroad by Tuesday: Mr. Hull read his part very well. Miss Younge is perfectly mistress of her part, is pleased with it, and I think will do it justice. I never saw her play so ably. Miss Satchell, who is to play Adelaide, is exactly what she should be: very young, pretty enough, natural and simple. She has already acted Juliet with success. Her voice is not only pleasing, but very audible; and, which is much more rare, very articulate: she does not gabble, as most young women do, even off the stage. Mr. Wroughton much exceeded my expectation. He enters warmly into his part, and with thorough zeal. Mr. Lewis was so very imperfect in his part, that I cannot judge quite what he will do, for he could not repeat two lines by heart; but he looked haughtily, and as he pleased me in Percy, which is the same kind of character, I promise myself he will succeed in this.

Very, very few lines will be omitted; and there will be one or two verbal alterations to accommodate the disposition, but which will not appear in the printed copies, of which Mr. Malone says he will take the management. As Mr. Harris and the players all seemed zealous and in good humour, I would not contest some trifles; and, indeed, they were not at all unreasonable. I am to see the scenes on Friday, if I am able; and if Mr. Henderson is well enough, the play will be

¹ Now first printed.

performed on the 17th or immediately after. Some slight delays, which one cannot foresee, may always happen. In truth, I little expected so much readiness and compliance both in manager and actors; nor, from all I have heard of the stage, could conceive such facilities. From the moment Mr. Harris consented to perform your play, there has not been one instance of obstinacy or wrongheadedness anywhere. If the audience is as reasonable and just, you may, Sir, promise yourself complete success.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 13, 1781.

I HAVE this minute, Sir, received the corrected copy of your tragedy, which is almost all I am able to say, for I have so much gout in this hand, and it shakes so much, that I am scarce able to manage my pen. I will go to town if I can, and consult Mr. Henderson on the alterations; though I confess I think it dangerous to propose them so late before representation, which the papers say again is to be on Saturday if Mr. Henderson is well enough. Mr. Malone shall have the corrected copy for impression.

I own I cannot suspect that Mr. Sheridan will employ any ungenerous arts against your play. I have never heard anything to give me suspicions of his behaving unhandsomely; and as you indulge my zeal and age a liberty of speaking like a friend, I would beg you to suppress your sense of the too great prerogatives of theatric monarchs. I hope you will again and again have occasion to court the power of their crowns; and, therefore if not for your own, for the sake of the public, do not declare war with them. It has not been my practice to preach slavery; but, while one deals with and depends on mimic sovereigns, I would *act* policy, especially when by temporary passive obedience one can really lay a lasting obligation on one's country, which your plays really are.

¹ Now first printed.

I am glad you approve what I had previously undertaken, Mr. Harris's procuring an epilogue; he told me on Saturday that he should have one. You are very happy in friends, Sir; which is another proof of your merit. Mr. Malone is not less zealous than Mr. Tighe, to whom I beg my compliments.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Berkeley Square, Nov. 18, 1781.

As Mr. Malone undertook to give you an account, Sir, by last night's post, of the great success of your tragedy, I did not hasten home to write; but stayed at the theatre, to talk to Mr. Harris and the actors, and learn what was said, besides the general applause. Indeed I never saw a more unprejudiced audience, nor more attention. There was not the slightest symptom of disapprobation to any part, and the plaudit was great and long when given out again for Monday. I mention these circumstances in justification of Mr. Sheridan, to whom I never spoke in my life, but who certainly had not sent a single person to hurt you. The prologue was exceedingly liked; and, for effect, no play ever produced more tears. In the green-room I found that Hortensia's sudden death was the only incident disapproved, as we heard by intelligence from the pit; and it is to be deliberated to-morrow whether it may not be preferable to carry her off as if only in a swoon. When there is only so slight an objection, you cannot doubt of your full success. It is impossible to say how much justice Miss Younge did to your writing. She has shown herself a great mistress of her profession, mistress of dignity, passion, and of all the sentiments you have put into her hands. The applause given to her description of Raymond's death lasted some minutes, and recommenced; and her scene in the fourth act, after the Count's ill-usage, was played in the highest perfection. Mr. Henderson was far better than I expected from his weakness, and from his rehearsal yesterday, with which he was much discontented himself. Mr. Wroughton was very

¹ Now first printed.

animated, and played the part of the Count much better than any man now on the stage would have done. I wish I could say Mr. Lewis satisfied me; and that poor child Miss Satchell was very inferior to what she appeared at the rehearsals, where the total silence and our nearness deceived us. Her voice has no strength, nor is she yet at all mistress of the stage. I have begged Miss Younge to try what she can do with her by Monday. However, there is no danger to your play: it is fully established. I confess I am not only pleased on your account, Sir, but on Mr. Harris's, as he has been so very obliging to me. I am not likely to have any more intercourse with the stage; but I shall be happy if I leave my interlude there by settling an amity between you and Mr. Harris, whence I hope he will draw profit and you more renown.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Sunday morning, Nov. 18, 1781.

I HAVE been here again for three days, tending and nursing and waiting on Mr. Jephson's play. I have brought it into the world, was well delivered of it, it can stand on its own legs — and I am going back to my own quiet hill, never likely to have anything more to do with theatres. Indeed it has seemed strange to me, who for these three or four years have not been so many times in a play-house, nor knew six of the actors by sight, to be at two rehearsals, behind the scenes, in the green-room, and acquainted with half the company. The Count of Narbonne was played last night with great applause, and without a single murmur of disapprobation. Miss Younge has charmed me.¹ She played with intelligence that was quite surprising. The applause to one of her speeches lasted a minute, and recommenced twice before the play could go on. I am sure you will be pleased with the conduct and the easy beautiful language of the play, and struck with her acting.

¹ In 1786, this celebrated actress was married to Mr. Pope, the comedian. She died in 1797, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.—E.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 21, 1781.

I HAVE just received your two letters, Sir, and the epilogue, which I am sorry came so late, as there are very pretty things in it: but I believe it would be very improper to produce it now, as the two others have been spoken.

I am sorry you are discontent with there being no standing figure of Alphonso, and that I acquiesced in its being cum-bent. I did certainly yield, and I think my reasons will justify me. In the first place, you seemed to have made a distinction between the statue and the tomb; and, had both been represented, they would have made a confusion. But a more urgent reason for my compliance was the shortness of the time, which did not allow the preparation of an entire new scene, as I proposed last year and this, nay, and mentioned it to Mr. Harris. When I came to the house to see the scene prepared, it was utterly impossible to adjust an erect figure to it; nor, indeed, do I conceive, were the scene disposed as you recommend, how Adelaide could be stabbed behind her scenes. As I never disguise the truth, I must own,—for I did think myself so much obliged to Mr. Harris,—that I was unwilling to heap difficulties on him, when I did not think they would hurt your piece. I fortunately was not mistaken: the entrance of Adelaide wounded had the utmost effect, and I believe much greater than would have resulted from her being stabbed on the stage. In short, the success has been so complete, and both your poetry and the conduct of the tragedy are so much and so justly admired, that I flatter myself you will not blame me for what has not produced the smallest inconvenience. Both the manager and the actors were tractable, I believe, beyond example; and it is my nature to bear some contradiction, when it will carry material points. The very morning, the only morning I had to settle the disposition, I had another difficulty to reconcile,—the com-

¹ Now first collected.

petition of the two epilogues, which I was so lucky as to compromise too. I will say nothing of my being three hours each time, on two several days, in a cold theatre with the gout on me; and perhaps it was too natural to give up a few points in order to get home, for which I ask your pardon. Yet the event shows that I have not injured you; and if I was in one instance impatient, I flatter myself that my solicitations to Mr. Harris and Miss Younge, and the zeal I have shown to serve you, will atone for my having in one moment thought of myself, and then only when the reasons that weighed with me were so plausible, that without a totally new scene, which the time would not allow, I do not see how they could have been obviated. Your tragedy, Sir, has taken such a rank upon the stage, that one may reasonably hope it will hereafter be represented with all the decorations to your mind; and I admire it so truly, that I shall be glad to have it conducted by an abler mechanist than your obedient humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1781.

EACH fresh mark of your lordship's kindness and friendship calls on me for thanks and an answer: every other reason would enjoin me silence. I not only grow so old, but the symptoms of age increase so fast, that, as they advise me to keep out of the world, that retirement makes me less fit to be informing or entertaining. The philosophers who have sported on the verge of the tomb, or they who have *affected* to sport in the same situation, both tacitly implied that it was not out of their thoughts; and however dear what we are going to leave may be, all that is, not particularly dear must cease to interest us much. If those reflections blend themselves with our gayest thoughts, must not their hue grow more dusky when public misfortunes and disgraces cast a general shade?¹ The age, it is

¹ The fatal intelligence of the surrender of the British forces at York Town, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, to the combined armies

true, soon emerges out of every gloom, and wantons as before. But does not that levity imprint a still deeper melancholy on those who do think? Have any of our calamities corrected us? Are we not revelling on the brink of the precipice? Does administration grow more sage, or desire that we should grow more sober? Are these themes for letters, my dear lord? Can one repeat common news with indifference, while our shame is writing for future history by the pens of all our numerous enemies? When did England see two whole armies lay down their arms and surrender themselves prisoners? Can venal addresses efface such stigmas, that will be recorded in every country in Europe? Or will such disgraces have no consequences? Is not America lost to us? Shall we offer up more human victims to the demon of obstinacy; and shall we tax ourselves deeper to furnish out the sacrifice? These are thoughts I cannot stifle at the moment that enforces them; and though I do not doubt but the same spirit of dissipation that has swallowed up all our principles will reign again in three days with its wonted sovereignty, I had rather be silent than vent my indignation. — Yet I cannot talk, for I cannot think, on any other subject. It was not six days ago, that in the height of four raging wars I saw in the papers an account of the Opera and of the dresses of the company; and thence the town, and thence of course the whole nation, were informed that Mr. Fitzpatrick had very little powder in his hair.¹ Would not one think that our newspapers were

of America and France, under General Washington, had reached England on the 25th.—E.

¹ The following picture of fashionable life at the time of Walpole's lament, is by Mr. Wilberforce:—"When I left the University, so little did I know of general society, that I came up to London stored with arguments to prove the authenticity of Rowley's poems; and now I was at once immersed in politics and fashion. The very first time I went to Boodle's, I won twenty-five guineas of the Duke of Norfolk. I belonged at this time to five clubs—Miles and Evans's, Brookes's, Boodle's, White's, Goostree's. The first time I was at Brookes's, scarcely knowing any one, I joined, from mere shyness, in play at the faro-table, where George Selwyn kept bank. A friend, who knew my inexperience, and regarded me as a victim decked out for sacrifice, called to me, 'What, Wilberforce! is that you?' Selwyn quite resented the interference; and, turning to him, said, in his most expressive tone, 'O, Sir, don't interrupt Mr. Wil-

penned by boys just come from school for the information of their sisters and cousins? Had we had Gazettes and Morning Posts in those days, would they have been filled with such tittle-tattle after the battle of Agincourt, or in the more resembling weeks after the battle of Naseby? Did the French trifle equally even during the ridiculous war of the Fronde? If they were as impertinent then, at least they had wit in their levity. We are monkeys in conduct, and as clumsy as bears when we try to gambol. Oh! my lord! I have no patience with my country! and shall leave it without regret! — Can we be proud when all Europe scorns us? It was wont to envy us, sometimes to hate us, but never despised us before. James the First was contemptible, but he did not lose an America! His eldest grandson sold us, his younger lost us — but we kept ourselves. Now we have run to meet the ruin — and it is coming!

I beg your lordship's pardon, if I have said too much — but I do not believe I have. You have never sold yourself, and therefore have not been accessary to our destruction. You must be happy *now* not to have a son, who would live to grovel in the dregs of England. Your lordship has long been so wise as to secede from the follies of your countrymen. May you and Lady Strafford long enjoy the tranquillity that has been your option even in better days! — and may you amuse yourself without giving loose to such reflections as have overflowed in this letter from your devoted humble servant!

berforce; he could not be better employed!' Nothing could be more luxurious than the style of these clubs. Fox, Sheridan, Fitzpatrick, and all your leading men, frequented them, and associated upon the easiest terms; you chatted, played at cards, or gambled, as you pleased. I was one of those who met to spend an evening in memory of Shakspeare, at the Boar's-head, East-cheap. Many professed wits were present, but Pitt was the most amusing of the party. We played a good deal at Goostree's; and I well remember the intense earnestness which he displayed when joining in those games of chance. He perceived their increasing fascination, and soon after suddenly abandoned them for ever." Life, vol. i. p. 16.—E.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.¹

Berkeley Square, Dec. 1, 1781.

I AM truly sensible of, and grateful for, your lordship's benevolent remembrance of me, and shall receive with great respect and pleasure the collection your lordship has been pleased to order to be sent to me. I must admire too, my lord, the generous assistance that you have lent to your adopted children; but more forcibly than all I feel your pathetic expressions on the distress of the public, which is visible even in this extravagant and thoughtless city. The number of houses to be let in every street, whoever runs may read.

At the time of your writing your letter, your lordship did not know the accumulation of misfortune and disgrace that has fallen on us;² nor should I wish to be the trumpeter of my country's calamities. Yet as they must float on the surface of the mind, and blend their hue with all its emanations, they suggest this reflection, that there can be no time so proper for the institution of inquiries into past story as the moment of the fall of an empire,—a nation becomes a theme for antiquaries, when it ceases to be one for an historian!—and while its ruins are fresh and in legible preservation.

I congratulate your lordship on the discovery of the Scottish monarch's portrait in Suabia, and am sorry you did not happen to specify of which; but I cannot think of troubling your lordship to write again on purpose; I may probably find it mentioned in some of the papers I shall receive.

There is one passage in your lordship's letter in which I cannot presume to think myself included; and yet if I could suppose I was, it would look like most impertinent neglect and unworthiness of the honour that your lordship and the society have done me, if I did not at least offer very humbly to obey it. You are pleased to say, my lord, that the members, when

¹ Now first collected.

² The surrender of the British army at York-town. See *antè*, p. 149.
—E.

authors, have agreed to give copies of such of their works as any way relate to the objects of the institution. Amongst my very trifling publications, I think there are none that can pretend even remotely to that distinction, but the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, and the Anecdotes of Painting, in each of which are Scottish authors or artists. If these should be thought worthy of a corner on any shelf of the society's library, I should be proud of sending, at your lordship's command, the original edition of the first. Of the latter I have not a single set left but my own. But I am printing a new edition in octavo, with many additions and corrections, though without cuts, as the former edition was too dear for many artists to purchase. The new I will send when finished, if I could hope it would be acceptable, and your lordship would please to tell me by what channel.

I am ashamed, my lord, to have said so much, or anything relating to myself. I ask you pardon too for the slovenly writing of my letter; but my hand is both lame and shaking, and I should but write worse if I attempted transcribing.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, my lord,
your lordship's most obedient and
obliged humble servant.

P. S. It has this moment started into my mind, my lord, that I have heard that at the old castle at Aubigny, belonging and adjoining to the Duke of Richmond's house, there are historic paintings or portraits of the ancient house of Lennox. I recollect too that Father Gordon, superior of the Scots College at Paris, showed me a whole-length of Queen Mary, young, and which he believed was painted while she was Queen of France. He showed me too the original letter she wrote the night before her execution, some deeds of Scottish kings, and one of King (I think Robert) Bruce, remarkable for having no seal appendent, which, Father Gordon said, was executed in the time of his so great distress, that he was not possessed of a seal. I shall be happy if these hints lead to any investigation of use.

TO ROBERT JEPHSON, ESQ.¹

Berkeley Square, Dec. 3, 1781.

I HAVE not only a trembling hand, but scarce time to save the post; yet I write a few lines to beg you will be perfectly easy on my account, who never differ seriously with my friends, when I know they do not mean ill to me. I was sorry you took so much to heart an alteration in the scenery of your play,² which did not seem to me very material; and which, having since been adjusted to your wish, had no better effect. I told you that it was my fault, not Mr. Malone's, who is warmly your friend; and I am sure you will be sorry if you do him injustice. I regret no pains I have taken, since they have been crowned with your success; and it would be idle in either of us to recall any little cross circumstance that may have happened, (as always do in bringing a play on the stage,) when they have not prevented its appearance or good fortune. Be assured, Sir, if that is worth knowing, that I have taken no offence, and have all the same good wishes for you that I ever had since I was acquainted with your merit and abilities. I can easily allow for the anxiety of a parent of your genius for his favourite offspring; and though I have not your parts, I have had the warmth, though age and illness have chilled it: but, thank God! they have not deprived me of my good-humour, and I am most good-humouredly and sincerely your obedient humble servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 30, 1781.

WE are both hearty friends, my dear Sir, for I see we have both been reproaching ourselves with silence at the same moment. I am much concerned that you have had cause for yours.³ I have had less, though indisposed too in

¹ Now first collected.² See *antè*, p. 147.—E.³ Mr. Cole, in a letter of the 31st, says, "About six weeks ago the

a part material for correspondence — my right hand, which has been in labour of chalk-stones this whole summer, and at times so nervous as to tremble so much, that, except when quite necessary, I have avoided a pen. I have been delivered of such a quantity of chalky matter, that I am not only almost free from pain, but hope to avoid a fit this winter. How there can be a doubt what the gout is, amazes me ! what is it but a concretion of humours, that either stop up the fine vessels, cause pain and inflammation, and pass away only by perspiration ; or which discharge themselves into chalk-stones, which sometimes remain in their beds, sometimes make their passage outwardly ? I have experienced all three. It may be objected, that the sometimes instantaneous removal of pain from one limb to another is too rapid for a current of chalk — true, but not for the humour before coagulated. As there is, evidently, too, a degree of wind mixed with the gout, may not that wind be impregnated with the noxious effluvia, especially as the latter are pent up in the body and may be corrupted ?—I hope your present complaint in the foot will clear the rest of your person. Many thanks for your etching of Mr. Browne Willis : I shall value it not only as I am a collector, but because he was your friend. What shall I say about Mr. Gough ? he is not a pleasant man, and I doubt will tease me about many things, some of which I never cared about, and all which I interest myself little about now, when I seek to pass my remnant in the most indolent tranquillity. He has not been very civil to me, he worships the fools I despise, and I conceive has no genuine taste ; yet as to trifling resentments, when the objects have not acted with bad hearts, I can most readily lose them. Please Mr. Gough, I certainly shall not ; I cannot be very grave about such idle studies as his and my own, and am apt to be impatient, or laugh when people

gout was harassing both my feet ; on Christmas-day it shifted its quarters, and got into my left hand ; and inexpressible have been the pain and torment I have endured, with sleepless nights, racking pain, and no rest nor relief by day. I hope the worst is over, as I had a comfortable sleep for the whole night last night : but my hopes are like those in a ship in a storm ; when one billow is past, another and greater is at the heels of it : for a water-drinker my lot is hard.”—E.

imagine I am serious about them. But there is a stronger reason why I shall not satisfy Mr. Gough. He is a man to minute down whatever one tells him that he may call information, and whip it into his next publication. However, though I am naturally very frank, I can regulate myself by those I converse with; and as I shall be on my guard, I will not decline visiting Mr. Gough, as it would be illiberal or look surly if I refused. You shall have the merit, if you please, of my assent; and shall tell him, I shall be glad to see him any morning at eleven o'clock. This will save you the trouble of sending me his new work, as I conclude he will mention it to me.

I more willingly assure you that I shall like to see Mr. Steevens,¹ and to show him Strawberry. You never sent me a person you commended, that I did not find deserved it.

You will be surprised when I tell you, that I have only dipped into Mr. Bryant's book, and lent the Dean's before I had cut the leaves, though I had peeped into it enough to see that I shall not read it. Both he and Bryant are so diffuse on our antiquated literature, that I had rather believe in Rowley than go through their proofs. Mr. Warton and Mr. Tyrwhitt have more patience, and intend to answer them — and so the controversy will be two hundred years

¹ George Steevens, Esq. In 1770, this eminent scholar and learned commentator became associated with Dr. Johnson in the edition of Shakspeare which goes by their joint names. A fourth edition, with large additions, was published in 1793, in fifteen volumes octavo. In the preparation of it for the press, Mr. Steevens gave an instance of editorial activity and perseverance, which is, probably, without a parallel. For a period of eighteen months, he devoted himself solely and exclusively to the work; and, during that time, left his house every morning at one o'clock with the Hampstead patrol, and proceeded, without any consideration of weather or season, to the chambers of his friend, Isaac Reed, in Staple's Inn, where he found a sheet of the Shakspeare letter-press ready for his revision: thus, while the printers were asleep, the editor was awake; and the fifteen large volumes were completed in the short space of twenty months. The feat is recorded by Mr. Matthias, in the Pursuits of Literature:—

“ Him late, from Hampstead journeying to his book,
Aurora oft for Cephalus mistook;
What time he brush'd her dew with hasty pace,
To meet the printer's dev'let face to face.”

He died at Hampstead in 1800, and in his sixty-fourth year.—E.

out of my reach. Mr. Bryant, I did find, begged a vast many questions, which proved to me his own doubts. Dr. Glynn's foolish evidence made me laugh, and so did Mr. Bryant's sensibility *for me*; he says Chatterton treated me very *cruelly* in one of his writings. I am sure I did not feel it so. I suppose Bryant means under the title of Baron of Otranto, which is written with humour. I must have been the sensitive plant if anything in that character had hurt me! Mr. Bryant too, and the Dean, as I see by extracts in the papers, have decorated Chatterton with sanctimonious honour—think of that young rascal's note, when, summing up his gains and losses by writing for and against Beckford, he says, “Am glad he is dead by 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*” *There* was a lad of too nice honour to be capable of forgery! and a lad who, they do not deny, forged the poems in the style of Ossian, and fifty other things. In the parts I did read, Mr. Bryant, as I expected, reasons admirably, and staggered me; but when I took up the poems called Rowley's again, I protest I cannot see the smallest air of antiquity but the old words. The whole texture is conceived on ideas of the present century. The liberal manner of thinking of a monk so long before the Reformation is as stupendous; and where he met with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, *Eclogues*, and plans of Greek tragedies, when even Caxton, a printer, took Virgil's *Æneid* for so rare a novelty, are not less incomprehensible: though on these things I speak at random, nor have searched for the era when the Greek and Latin classics came again to light—at present I imagine long after our Edward the Fourth.

Another thing struck me in my very cursory perusal of Bryant. He asks where Chatterton could find so much knowledge of English events? I could tell him where he might, by a very natural hypothesis, though merely an hypothesis. It appears by the evidence, that Canninge left six chests of manuscripts, and that Chatterton got possession of some or several. Now what was therein *so probably* as a diary drawn up by Canninge himself, or some churchwarden or wardens, or by a monk or monks? Is anything more

natural than for such a person, amidst the events at Bristol, to set down such other public facts as happened in the rest of the kingdom? Was not such almost all the materials of our ancient story? There is actually such an one, with some curious collateral facts, if I am not mistaken,—for I write by memory,—in the History of Furnese or Fountain's Abbey, I forget which: if Chatterton found such an one, did he want the extensive literature on which so much stress is laid? Hypothesis for hypothesis, — I am sure this is as rational an one as the supposition that six chests were filled with poems never else heard of.

These are my indigested thoughts on this matter — not that I ever intend to digest them — for I will not, at sixty-four, sail back into the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and be drowned in an ocean of monkish writers of those ages or of this! Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 27, 1782.

For these three weeks I have had the gout in my left elbow and hand, and can yet but just bear to lay the latter on the paper while I write with the other. However, this is no complaint, for it is the shortest fit I have had these sixteen years, and with trifling pain; therefore, as the fits decrease, it does ample honour to my bootikins, regimen, and method. Next to my bootikins, I ascribe much credit to a diet-drink of dock-roots, of which Dr. Turton asked me for the receipt, as the best he had ever seen, and which I will send you if you please. It came from an old physician at Richmond, who did amazing service with it in inveterate scurvies,—the parents, or ancestors at least, I believe, of all gout. Your fit I hope is quite gone.

Mr. Gough has been with me. I never saw a more dry or more cold gentleman. He told me his new plan is a series of English monuments. I do like the idea, and offered to lend him drawings for it.

I have seen Mr. Steevens too, who is much more flowing. I wish you had told me it was the editor of Shakspeare, for, on his mentioning Dr. Farmer, I launched out and said, he was by much the most rational of Shakspeare's commentators, and had given the only sensible account of the authors our great poet had consulted. I really meant those who wrote before Dr. Farmer. Mr. Steevens seemed a little surprised, which made me discover the blunder I had made, for which I was very sorry, though I had meant nothing by it; however, do not mention it. I hope he has too much sense to take it ill, as he must have seen I had no intention of offending him; on the contrary, that my whole behaviour marked a desire of being civil to him as your friend, in which light only you had named him to me. Pray take no notice of it, though I could not help mentioning it, as it lies on my conscience to have been even undesignedly and indirectly unpolite to anybody you recommend. I should not, I trust, have been so unintentionally to anybody, nor with intention, unless provoked to it by great folly or dirtiness. Adieu!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 14, 1782.

I HAVE received such treasures from you, dear Sir, through the channel of Mr. Nichols, that I neither know how to thank you, nor to find time to peruse them so fast as I am impatient to do. You must complete your kindness by letting me detain them a few days, till I have gone through them, when I will return them most carefully by the same intervention; and particularly the curious piece of enamel; for though you are, as usual, generous enough to offer it to me, I have plundered you too often already; and indeed I have room left for nothing more, nor have that miserly appetite of continuing to hoard what I cannot enjoy, nor have much time left to possess.

I have already looked into your beautiful illuminated manuscript copied from Dr. Stukeley's letter, and with Anec-

dotes of the Antiquaries of Bennet College; and I have found therein so many charming instances of your candour, humility, and justice, that I grieve to deprive Mr. Gough for a minute even of the possession of so valuable a tract. I will not injure him or it, by begging you to cancel what relates to me, as it would rob you of part of your defence of Mr. Baker. If I wish to have it detained from Mr. Gough till the period affixed in the first leaf, or rather to my death, which will probably precede yours, it is for this reason only; Mr. Gough is apt, as we antiquaries are, to be impatient to tell the world all he knows, which is unluckily much more than the world is at all impatient of knowing. For what you call *your flaming zeal*, I do not in the least object to it. We have agreed to tolerate each other, and certainly are neither of us infallible. I think, on what we differ most is, your calling *my* opinions *fashionable*; they were when we took them up: I doubt it is yours that are most in fashion now, at least in this country. The Emperor seems to be of *our* party; but, if I like his notions, I do not admire his judgment, which is too precipitate to *be* judgment.

I smiled at Mr. Gough's idea of my declining his acquaintance as a member of that *obnoxious* Society of Antiquaries. It is their folly alone that is obnoxious to me, and can they help that? I shall very cheerfully assist him.

I am glad you are undeceived about the controversial piece in the Gentleman's Magazine, which I should have assured you, as you now know, that it was not mine. I declared, in *my Defence*,¹ that I would publish nothing more about that question. I have not, nor intend it. Neither was it I that wrote the prologue to The Count of Narbonne, but Mr. Jephson himself. On the opposite page I will add the re-

¹ Hannah More, in a letter to Mrs. Boscawen, says, "Many thanks for Mr. Walpole's sensible, temperate, and humane pamphlet. I am not quite a convert yet to his side of the Chattertonian controversy, though this elegant writer and all the antiquaries and critics in the world are against me; but I like much the candid regret he everywhere discovers at not having fostered this unfortunate lad, whose profligate manners, however, I too much fear, would not have done credit to any patronage. Mrs. Garrick read it, and was more interested than I have seen her."—E.

ceipt for the diet-drink: as to my regimen, I shall not specify it. Not only you would not adopt it, but I should tremble to have you. In fact, I never do prescribe it, as I am persuaded it would kill the strongest man in England, who was not exactly of the same temperament with me, and who had not embraced it early. It consists in temperance to quantity as to eating — I do not mind the quality; but I am persuaded that great abstinence with the gout is dangerous; for, if one does not take nutriment enough, there cannot be strength sufficient to fling out the gout, and then it deviates to palsies. But my great nostrum is the use of cold water, inwardly and outwardly, on all occasions, and total disregard of precaution against catching cold. A hat you know I never wear, my breast I never button, nor wear great-coats, &c. I have often had the gout in my face (as last week) and eyes, and instantly dip my head in a pail of cold water, which always cures it, and does not send it anywhere else. All this I dare do, because I have so for these forty years, weak as I look; but Milo would not have lived a week if he had played such pranks. My diet-drink is not all of so Quixote a disposition; any of the faculty will tell you how innocent it is, at least. In a few days, for I am a rapid reader when I like my matter, I will return all your papers and letters; and in the mean time thank you most sincerely for the use of them.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

February 15, 1782.

I was so impatient to peruse all the literary stores you sent me, dear Sir, that I stayed at home on purpose to give up a whole evening to them. I have gone through all; your own manuscript, which I envy Mr. Gough, his specimen, and the four letters to you from the latter and Mr. Steevens. I am glad they were both satisfied with my reception. In truth, you know I am neither formal nor austere, nor have any grave aversion to our antiquaries, though I do now and then divert myself with their solemnity about arrant trifles;

yet perhaps we owe much to their thinking those trifles of importance, or the Lord knows how they would have patience to investigate them so indefatigably. Mr. Steevens seemed pleasant, but I doubt I shall never be demure enough to conciliate Mr. Gough. Then I have a wicked quality in an antiquary, nay, one that annihilates the essence: that is, I cannot bring myself to a habit of minute accuracy about very indifferent points. I do not doubt but there is a swarm of diminutive inaccuracies in my Anecdotes — well! if there is, I bequeath free leave of correction to the microscopic intellects of my continuators. I took dates and facts from the sedulous and faithful Vertue,¹ and piqued myself on little but on giving an idea of the spirit of the times with regard to the arts at the different periods.

The specimen you present me of Mr. Gough's detail of our monuments is very differently treated, proves vast industry, and shows most circumstantial fidelity. It extends, too, much farther than I expected; for it seems to embrace the whole mass of our monuments, nay, of some that are vanished. It is not what I thought, an intention of representing our modes of dress, from figures on monuments, but rather a history of our tombs. It is fortunate, though he may not think so, that so many of the more ancient are destroyed, since for three or four centuries they were clumsy, rude, and ugly. I know I am but a fragment of an antiquary, for I abhor all Saxon doings, and whatever did not exhibit some taste, grace, or elegance, and some ability in the artists. Nay, if I may say so to you, I do not care a straw for archbishops, bishops, mitred abbots, and cross-legged knights. When you have one of a sort, you have seen all. However, to so superficial a *student in antiquity* as I am, Mr. Gough's work is not unentertaining. It has frequently anecdotes and circumstances of

¹ George Vertue, the engraver, was born in London in 1684, and died in 1756. Walpole has given a short sketch of his active life in his *Anecdotes of Painting in England*; a work, for the materials of which he was, in a great measure, indebted to the collections of Vertue, which he bought of his widow. "These collections," he says, "amounted to nearly forty volumes, large and small: in one of his pocket-books I found a note of his first intention of compiling such a work; it was in 1713, and he continued it assiduously to his death."—E.

kings, queens, and historic personages, that interest me; though I care not a straw about a series of bishops who had only Christian names, or were removed from one old church to a newer. Still I shall assist Mr. Gough with whatever he wants in my possession. I believe he is a very worthy man, and I should be a churl not to oblige any man who is so innocently employed. I have felt the selfish, the proud avarice of those who hoard literary curiosities for themselves alone, as other misers do money.

I observed in your account of the Count-Bishop Hervey, that you call one of his dedicators Martin Sherlock, *Esquire*.¹ That Mr. Sherlock is an Irish clergyman; I am acquainted with him. He is a very amiable good-natured man, and wants judgment, not parts. He is a little damaged by aiming at Sterne's capricious pertness, which the original wore out; and which, having been admired and cried up to the skies by foreign writers of reviews, was, on the contrary, too severely treated by our own. That injustice shocked Mr. Sherlock, who has a good heart and much simplicity, and sent him in dudgeon last year to Ireland, determined to write no

¹ This eccentric and original writer had published a book at Rome in Italian, and two others at Paris, in French. The first volume of his "Letters from an English Traveller," translated by the Rev. John Duncombe, appeared in London in 1779, before the author's return from the Continent, and before it was known that he was in holy orders. The Letters were dedicated to the Hon. and Rev. Frederick Augustus Hervey, Bishop of Derry, and afterwards Earl of Bristol. (See *antè*, p. 66.) This volume was republished, revised and corrected by the author, in 1780, and was soon followed by "New Letters of an English Traveller." In 1781, Mr. Sherlock had a strong inclination to revisit the Continent, and actually caused the following article to be inserted in a public journal:—"It is now generally supposed, that, whoever may be honoured with the negotiation at Vienna, Mr. Sherlock, the celebrated English traveller and chaplain to the Earl of Bristol, will be appointed secretary to the embassy. His great literary and political abilities, and his polite accomplishments, are in high estimation throughout the Continent; and he is, perhaps, the only Englishman who can boast of having familiarly conversed with the several high potentates whose alliance at this important juncture it would be desirable to obtain. His being in orders is an objection which will vanish, when it is recollected that the very same important office was, in 1708, intended for Dr. Swift: a name which, however deservedly revered in Great Britain and Ireland, must, in every other kingdom of Europe, give precedence to those of Sherlock, Rousseau, and Sterne, the luminaries of the present century." In June of the same year he was presented, by the Bishop of Killala, with a living of 200*l.* a year. Upon which occasion he wrote to his publisher, "I think it may be of use to

more; yet I am persuaded he will, so strong is his propensity to being an author; and if he does, correction may make him more attentive to what he says and writes. He has no gall; on the contrary, too much benevolence in his indiscriminate praise; but he has made many ingenious criticisms. He is a just, a due enthusiast to Shakspeare: but, alas! he scarce likes Richardson less.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

[1782?]

I HAVE been reading a new French translation of the elder Pliny,¹ of whom I never read but scraps before; because, in the poetical manner in which we learn Latin at Eton, we never become acquainted with the names of the commonest things, too undignified to be admitted into verse; and, therefore, I never had patience to search in a dictionary for the meaning of every substantive. I find I shall not have a great deal less trouble with the translation, as I am not more familiar with their common *drogues* than with the Latin. However, the beginning goes off very glibly, as I am not yet

our sale to let the world know it in the newspapers; and I am persuaded that *doubling* the value of the living will make the books sell better. The world (God bless it!) is very apt to value a man's writings according to his rank and fortune. I am sure they will think more highly of my Letters, if they believe I have 400*l.* a-year, than if they think I have only two. Pope, you know, says something like this—

‘A saint in crape, is twice a saint in lawn.’

Will you then be so good as to have this paragraph put into the Morning Herald, the Morning Chronicle, the Morning Post, and any other fourth paper you choose? ‘We hear that the Rev. Martin Sherlock, M.A. &c. is collated to the united vicarages of Castleconner and Kilglass, worth 400*l.* a-year.’ Is there any news of me in London? Am I abused or well-spoken of in print? Are the writers as uneasy as they used to be about my vanity? Keep all printed things, reviews, newspapers, &c. about me, till I have an opportunity of sending for them. I think I shall have something for you by next year; but keep that a secret. I wish, for your sake, I was a bishop; for then, I will answer for it, my works would sell well.” An elegant edition of all Mr. Sherlock's Letters was published by Mr. Nichols in 1802, in two volumes octavo. It is now a very scarce book. In 1788, he was collated to the rectory and vicarage of Skreen, and soon afterwards to the archdeaconry of Killala. He died in 1797.—E.

¹ By Poinsinet de Sivry, in twelve volumes quarto.—E.

arrived below the planets: but do you know that this study, of which I have never thought since I learnt astronomy at Cambridge, has furnished me with some very entertaining ideas! I have long been weary of the common jargon of poetry. You bards have exhausted all the nature we are acquainted with; you have treated us with the sun, moon, and stars, the earth and the ocean, mountains and valleys, &c. &c. under every possible aspect. In short, I have longed for some American poetry, in which I might find new appearances of nature, and consequently of art. But my present excursion into the sky has afforded me more entertaining prospects, and newer phenomena. If I was as good a poet as you are, I would immediately compose an idyl, or an elegy, the scene of which should be laid in Saturn or Jupiter; and then, instead of a niggardly soliloquy by the light of a single moon, I would describe a night illuminated by four or five moons at least, and they should be all in a perpendicular or horizontal line, according as Celia's eyes (who probably in that country has at least two pair) are disposed in longitude or latitude. You must allow that this system would diversify poetry amazingly.—And then Saturn's belt! which the translator says in his notes, is not round the planet's waist, like the shingles; but is a globe of crystal that encloses the whole orb, as you may have seen an enamelled watch in a case of glass. If you do not perceive what infinitely pretty things may be said, either in poetry or romance, on a brittle heaven of crystal, and what furbelowed rainbows they must have in that country, you are neither the Ovid nor natural philosopher I take you for. Pray send me an eclogue directly upon this plan — and I give you leave to adopt my idea of Saturnian Celias having their everything quadrupled — which would form a much more entertaining rhapsody than Swift's thought of magnifying or diminishing the species in his Gulliver. How much more execution a fine woman would do with two pair of *piercers*! or four! and how much longer the honeymoon would last, if both the sexes have (as no doubt they have) four times the passions, and four times the means of gratifying them! — I have opened new worlds to you.— You must be four times the poet you are, and then you will

be above Milton, and equal to Shakspeare, the only two mortals I am acquainted with who ventured beyond the visible diurnal sphere, and preserved their intellects. Dryden himself would have talked nonsense, and, I fear, indecency, on my plan; but you are too good a divine, I am sure, to treat my quadruple love but platonically. In Saturn, notwithstanding their glass-case, they are supposed to be very cold; but platonic love of itself produces frigid conceits enough, and you need not augment the dose — But I will not dictate. The subject is new; and you, who have so much imagination, will shoot far beyond me. Fontenelle would have made something of the idea, even in prose; but Algarotti would dishearten anybody from attempting to meddle with the system of the universe a second time in a genteel dialogue.¹ Good night! I am going to bed.—Mercy on me! if I should dream of Celia with four times the usual attractions!

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

February 22, 1782.

I DOUBT you are again in error, my good Sir, about the letter in the Gentleman's Magazine against the Rowleians, unless Mr. Malone sent it to you; for he is the author, and not Mr. Steevens, from whom I imagine you received it.² There is a report that some part of Chatterton's forgery is to be produced by an accomplice; but this I do not answer for, nor know the circumstances. I have scarce seen a person who is not persuaded that the *fashion* of the poems was Chatterton's own, though he might have found some old stuff to work upon, which very likely was the case; but now that the poems have been so much examined, nobody (that has an ear) can get over the modernity of the modulations, and the recent cast of the ideas and phraseology, corroborated by such palp-

¹ A translation of Count Algarotti's "Newtonianismo per Le Dame," by Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, under the title of "Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy explained for the Use of the Ladies; in six Dialogues of Light and Colours," appeared in 1739.—E.

² It was afterwards published separately, under the title of "Cursory Observations on the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century."—E.

able pillage of Pope and Dryden. Still the boy remains a prodigy, by whatever means he procured or produced the edifice erected; and still it will be found inexplicable how he found time or materials for operating such miracles.

You are in another error about Sir Harry Englefield, who cannot be going to marry a daughter of Lord Cadogan, unless he has a natural one, of whom I never heard. Lord Cadogan has no daughter by his first wife, and his eldest girl by my niece is not five years old.¹ The act of the Emperor to which I alluded, is the general destruction of convents in Flanders, and, I suppose, in his German dominions too. The Pope suppressed the carnival, as mourning, and proposes a journey to Vienna to implore mercy.² This is a little different from the time when the pontiffs trampled on the necks of emperors, and called it trampling *super Aspidem et Draconem*. I hope you have received your cargo back undamaged. I was much obliged to you, and am yours ever.

TO THE HON. GEORGE HARDINGE.

March 8, 1782.

It is very pleasing to receive congratulation from a friend on a friend's success: that success, however, is not so agreeable as the universal esteem allowed to Mr. Conway's character, which not only accompanies his triumph,³ but I believe

¹ Lord Cadogan married, in 1747, Frances, daughter of the first Lord Montfort; and secondly, in 1777, Mary, daughter of Charles Churchill, Esq. by Lady Mary, daughter of Sir Robert Walpole.—E.

² The Emperor Joseph, having been restrained during the lifetime of Maria Theresa from acting as he wished in ecclesiastical matters, upon her death, in November 1780, issued two ordinances respecting religious orders: by one forbidding the Roman Catholics to hold correspondence with their chief in foreign parts; and by the other forbidding any bull or ordinance of the Pope from being received in his dominions, until sanctioned by him. In 1782, he directed the suppression of the religious houses; upon which he was visited at Vienna by the Pope, who was received with great respect, but was unable to procure any intermission in the Emperor's ecclesiastical reforms.—E.

³ General Conway had, on the 27th of February, distinguished himself in the House of Commons by a motion, "That the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European

contributed to it. To-day, I suppose, all but his character will be reversed; for there must have been a miraculous change if the Philistines do not bear as ample a testimony to their Dagon's honour, as conviction does to that of a virtuous man. In truth, I am far from desiring that the Opposition should prevail yet: the nation is not sufficiently changed, nor awakened enough, and it is sure of having its feelings repeatedly attacked by more woes; the blow will have more effect a little time hence: the clamour must be loud enough to drown the huzzas of five hoarse bodies, the Scotch, Tories, Clergy, Law, and Army, who would soon croak if new ministers cannot do what the old have made impossible; and therefore, till general distress involves all in complaint, and lays the cause undeniably at the right doors, victory will be but momentary, and the conquerors would soon be rendered more unpopular than the vanquished; for, depend upon it, the present ministers would not be as decent and as harmless an Opposition as the present. Their criminality must be legally proved and stigmatised, or the pageant itself would soon be restored to essence. Base money will pass till cried down. I wish you may keep your promise of calling upon me better than you have done. Remember, that though *you* have time enough before you, I have not; and, consequently, must be much more impatient for our meeting than you are, as I am, dear Sir, yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, March 9, 1782.

THOUGH I have scarce time, I must write a line to thank you for the print of Mr. Cowper, and to tell you how ashamed I am that you should have so much attention to me, on the

enemies; tend, under the present circumstances, to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests both of Great Britain and America; and, by preventing a happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire graciously expressed by his Majesty, to restore the blessings of public tranquillity." This motion was carried by a majority of 234 to 213; upon which the General moved an humble address to his Majesty thereupon, which was carried without a division.—E.

slightest wish I express, when I fear my gratitude is not half so active, though it ought to exceed obligations.

Dr. Farmer has been with me; and though it was but a short visit, he pleased me so much by his easy simplicity and good sense, that I wish for more acquaintance with him.

I do not know whether the Emperor will atone to you for demolishing the cross, by attacking the crescent. The papers say he has declared war with the Turks. He seems to me to be a mountebank who professes curing all diseases. As power is his only panacea, the remedy methinks is worse than the disease. Whether Christianity will be laid aside, I cannot say. As nothing of the spirit is left, the forms, I think, signify very little. Surely it is not an age of morality and principle; does it import whether profligacy is baptized or not? I look to motives, not to professions. I do not approve of convents: but, if Cæsar wants to make soldiers of monks, I detest his reformation, and think that men had better not procreate than commit murder; nay, I believe that monks get more children than soldiers do; but what avail abstracted speculations? Human passions wear the dresses of the times, and carry on the same views, though in different habits. Ambition and interest set up religions or pull them down, as fashion presents a handle; and the conscientious must be content when the mode favours their wishes, or sigh when it does not.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

April 13, 1782.

YOUR partiality to me, my good Sir, is much overseen, if you think me fit to correct your Latin. Alas! I have not skimmed ten pages of Latin these dozen years. I have dealt in nothing but English, French, and a little Italian; and do not think, if my life depended on it, I could write four lines of pure Latin. I have had occasion once or twice to speak that language, and soon found that all my verbs were Italian with Roman terminations. I would not on any account draw you into a scrape, by depending on my skill in what I have half

forgotten. But you are in the metropolis of Latium. If you distrust your own knowledge, which I do not, especially from the specimen you have sent me, surely you must have good critics at your elbow to consult.

In truth, I do not love Roman inscriptions in lieu of our own language, though, if anywhere, proper in an university; neither can I approve writing what the Romans themselves would not understand. What does it avail to give a Latin tail to a Guildhall? Though the word used by moderns, would *major* convey to Cicero the idea of a *mayor*? *Architectus*, I believe, is the right word; but I doubt whether *veteris jam perantiquæ* is classic for a dilapidated building — but do not depend on me; consult some better judges.

Though I am glad of the late *revolution*,¹ a word for which I have great reverence, I shall certainly not dispute with you thereon. I abhor exultation. If the change produces peace, I shall make a bonfire in my heart. Personal interest I have none; you and I shall certainly never profit by the politics to which we are attached. The Archæologic Epistle I admire exceedingly, though I am sorry it attacks Mr. Bryant, whom I love and respect. The Dean is so absurd an oaf, that he deserves to be ridiculed. Is anything more hyperbolic than his preferences of Rowley to Homer, Shakspeare, and Milton? Whether Rowley or Chatterton was the author, are the poems in any degree comparable to those authors? is not a ridiculous author an object of ridicule? I do not even guess at your meaning in your conclusive paragraph on that subject: Dictionary-writer I suppose alludes to Johnson; but surely you do not equal the compiler of a dictionary to a genuine poet? Is a brickmaker on a level with Mr. Essex? Nor can I hold that exquisite wit and satire are Billingsgate; if they were, Milles and Johnson would be able to write an answer to the epistle. I do as little guess whom you mean that got a pension by Toryism: if Johnson too, he got a pension for having abused pensioners, and yet took one himself, which was contemptible enough. Still less know I who preferred

¹ The resignation of Lord North, and formation of the Rockingham administration.—E.

opposition to principles, which is not a very common case; whoever it was, as Pope says,

“The way he took was strangely round about.”

With Mr. Chamberlayne I was very little acquainted, nor ever saw him six times in my life. It was with Lord Walpole's branch he was intimate, and to whose eldest son Mr. Chamberlayne had been tutor. This poor gentleman had a most excellent character universally, and has been more feelingly regretted than almost any man I ever knew.¹ This is all I am able to tell you. I forgot to say, I am also in the dark as to the person you guess for the author of the Epistle. It cannot be the same person to whom it is generally attributed; who certainly neither has a pension nor has deserted his principles, nor has reason to be jealous of those he laughed at; for their abilities are far below his. I do not mean that it is his, but is attributed to him. It was sent to me; nor did I ever see a line of it till I read it in print. In one respect it is most credible to be his; for there are not two such inimitable poets in England.² I smiled on reading it, and said to myself, “Dr. Glynn is well off to have escaped!” His language indeed about me has been Billingsgate; but peace be to his and the

¹ Edward Chamberlayne, Esq. recently appointed secretary of the treasury. He was so overcome by a nervous terror of the responsibility of the office, that he committed suicide, by throwing himself out of a window on the 6th of April. On the following day, Hannah More sent the subjoined account of the melancholy event to her sister:—“Chamberlayne! the amiable, the accomplished, the virtuous, the religious Chamberlayne! in the full vigour of his age, high in reputation, happy in his prospects, threw himself out of the Treasury window, was taken up alive, and lived thirty-six hours in the most perfect possession of his mental activity, his religion, and his reasoning faculties. With an astonishing composure he settled his affairs with both worlds. He never seemed to feel any remorse, or to reproach his conscience with the guilt of suicide. In vain had they entreated him to accept of this place. In a fatal moment he consented: after this, he never had a moment's peace, and little or no sleep; this brought on a slow nervous fever, but not to confine him a moment. I saw him two days before. He looked pale and eager, and talked with great disgust of his place, on my congratulating him on such an acquisition. We chatted away, however, and he grew pleasant; and we parted—never to meet again.”—E.

² In a review of the edition of the Works of Mason which appeared in 1816, the Quarterly Review, after expressing a wish that this and the Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers had been included in the collection, says, “The Archæological Epistle was an hasty but animated effusion, drawn forth by the Rowleian Controversy, and dressed in the

manes of Rowley, if they have ghosts who never existed. The Epistle has not put an end to that controversy, which was grown so tiresome. I rejoice at having kept my resolution of not writing a word more on that subject. The Dean had swollen it to an enormous bladder; the Archæologic poet pricked it with a pin; a sharp one indeed, and it burst. Pray send me a better account of yourself if you can.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, May 24, 1782.

You are always kind to me, dear Sir, in all respects, but I have been forced to recur to a rougher prescription than ass's milk. The pain and oppression on my breast obliged me to be blooded two days together, which removed my cold and fever; but, as I foresaw, left me the gout in their room. I have had it in my left foot and hand for a week, but it is going. This cold is very epidemic. I have at least half a dozen nieces and great-nieces confined with it, but it is not dangerous or lasting. I shall send you, within this day or two, the new edition of my *Anecdotes of Painting*; you will find very little new: it is a cheap edition for the use of artists, and that at least they who really want the book, and not the curiosity, may have it, without being forced to give the outrageous price at which the Strawberry edition sells, merely because it is rare.

I could assure Mr. Gough, that the Letter on Chatterton cost me very small pains. I had nothing to do but recollect and relate the exact truth. There has been published another piece on it, which I cannot tell whether meant to praise or blame me, so wretchedly is it written; and I have received another anonymous one, dated Oxford, (which may be to disguise Cambridge,) and which professes to treat me very severely, though stuffed with fulsome compliments. It abuses me for speaking modestly of myself—a fault I hope I shall

garb of old English verse, in order to obviate the argument drawn from the difficulty of writing in the language of the fifteenth century. The task might indeed have been performed by many; but the sentiments accorded with the known declarations of Mason.”—Vol. xv. p. 385.—E.

never mend; avows agreeing with me on the supposition of the poems, which may be a lie, for it is not uncharitable to conclude that an anonymous writer is a liar; acquits me of being at all accessory to the poor lad's catastrophe; and then, with most sensitive nerves, is shocked to death, and finds me guilty of it, for having, after it happened, dropped, that had he lived he might have fallen into more serious forgeries, though I declare that I never heard that he did. To be sure, no Irishman ever blundered more than to accuse one of an *ex post facto* murder! If this Hibernian casuist is smitten enough with his own miscarriage to preserve it in a magazine phial, I shall certainly not answer it, not even by this couplet which is suggested:

So fulsome, yet so captious too, to tell you much it grieves me,
That though your flattery makes me sick, your peevishness relieves me.

Adieu, my good Sir. Pray inquire for your books, if you do not receive them: they go by the Cambridge Fly.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, June 1, 1782.

I THANK you much, dear Sir, for your kind intention about Elizabeth of York; but it would be gluttony and rapacity to accept her: I have her already in the picture of her marriage,¹ which was Lady Pomfret's; besides Vertue's print of her, with her husband, son, and daughter-in-law. In truth I have not room for any more pictures anywhere; yet, without plundering you, or without impoverishing myself, I have supernumerary pictures with which I can furnish your vacancies; but I must get well first to look them out. As yet I cannot walk alone; and my posture, as you see, makes me write ill. It is impossible to recover in such weather — never was such a sickly time.

¹ This picture of the marriage of Elizabeth of York with Henry the Seventh was painted by Mabuse, and is described in Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*.—E.

I have not yet seen Bishop Newton's Life. I will not give three guineas for what I would not give three-pence, his Works; his Life,¹ I conclude, will be borrowed by all the magazines, and there I shall see it.

I know nothing of *Acciliator* — I have forgotten some of my good Latin, and luckily never knew any bad; having always detested monkish barbarism. I have just finished Mr. Penant's new volume, parts of which amused me; though I knew every syllable that was worth knowing before, for there is not a word of novelty; and it is tiresome his giving such long extracts out of Dugdale and other common books, and telling one long stories about all the most celebrated characters in the English history, besides panegyrics on all who showed him their houses: but the prints are charming; though I cannot conceive why he gave one of the Countess of Cumberland, who never did anything worth memory, but recording the very night on which she conceived.

The "Fair Circassian" was written by a Mr. Pratt, who has published several works under the name of Courtney Melmoth.² The play might have been written by Cumberland, it is bad enough. I did read the latter's coxcombical Anec-

¹ Shortly after the death of Bishop Newton, his Works were published, with an autobiographical Memoir, in two volumes quarto. The prelate, speaking, in this Memoir, of Johnson's Lives of the Poets, having observed, that "candour was much hurt and offended at the malevolence that predominated in every part," the Doctor, in a conversation with Dr. Adams, master of Pembroke College, Oxford, thus retaliated on his townsman:—"Tom knew he should be dead before what he said of me would appear: he durst not have printed it while he was alive." DR. ADAMS:—"I believe his 'Dissertations on the Prophecies' is his great work." JOHNSON:—"Why, Sir, it is Tom's great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other questions. I fancy a considerable part of it was borrowed." DR. ADAMS:—"He was a very successful man." JOHNSON:—"I don't think so, Sir. He did not get very high. He was late in getting what he did get, and he did not get it by the best means. I believe he was a gross flatterer."—Life, vol. viii p. 286.—E.

² Mr. Pratt was the author of "Gleanings in England," "Gleanings through Wales, Holland, and Westphalia," and many other works which enjoyed a temporary popularity, but are now forgotten. Of Mr. Pratt, the following amusing anecdote is related by Mr. Gifford, in the *Mæviad*:—"This gentleman lately put in practice a very notable scheme. Having scribbled himself fairly out of notice, he found it expedient to retire to the Continent for a few months, to provoke the inquiries of Mr. Lane's indefatigable readers. Mark the ingratitude of the creatures! No in-

dotes,¹ but saw nothing on myself, except mention of my Painters. Pray what is the passage you mean on me or Vertue? Do not write on purpose to answer this, it is not worth while.

TO JOHN NICHOLS, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, June 19, 1782.

SIR,

JUST this moment, on opening your fifth volume of Miscellaneous Poems, I find the translation of Cato's speech into Latin, attributed (by common fame) to Bishop Atterbury. I can most positively assure you, that that translation was the work of Dr. Henry Bland, afterwards Head-master of Eton school, Provost of the college there, and Dean of Durham. I have more than once heard my father Sir Robert Walpole say, that it was he himself who gave that translation to Mr. Addison, who was extremely surprised at the fidelity and beauty of it. It may be worth while, Sir, on some future occasion, to mention this fact in some one of your valuable and curious publications. I am, Sir, with great regard.

quiries were made, and Mr. Pratt was forgotten before he had crossed the channel. *Ibi omnis effusus labor*—but what!

The mouse that is content with one poor hole,
Can never be a mouse of any soul:

baffled in this expedient, he had recourse to another, and, while we were dreaming of nothing less, came before us in the following paragraph:—‘A few days since died, at Basle in Switzerland, the ingenious Mr. Pratt: his loss will be severely felt by the literary world, as he joined to the accomplishments of the gentleman the erudition of the scholar.’ This was inserted in the London papers for several days successively; the country papers too ‘yelled out like syllables of dolour:’ at length, while our eyes were yet wet for the irreparable loss we had sustained, came a second paragraph as follows:—‘As no event of late has caused a more general sorrow than the supposed death of the ingenious Mr. Pratt, we are happy to have it in our power to assure his numerous admirers, that he is as well as they can wish, and (what they will be delighted to hear) busied in preparing his Travels for the press.’”—E.

¹ “Anecdotes of Eminent Painters, in Spain, during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, with cursory Remarks upon the present State of Arts in that Kingdom.”

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Berkeley Square, June 21, 1782.

It is no trouble, my good Sir, to write to you, for I am as well recovered as I generally do. I am very sorry you do not, and especially in your hands, as your pleasure and comforts so much depend on them. Age is by no means a burden while it does not subject one to depend on others; when it does, it reconciles one to quitting everything; at least I believe you and I think so, who do not look on solitude as a calamity. I shall go to Strawberry to-morrow, and will, as I might have thought of doing, consult Dugdale and Collins for the Duke of Ireland's inferior titles. Mr. Gough I shall be glad of seeing when I am settled there, which will not be this fortnight.

I think there are but eleven parts of Marianne, and that it breaks off in the nun's story, which promised to be very interesting. Marivaux never finished Marianne, nor the Paysan Parvenu (which was the case too with the younger Crébillon with Les Egaremens). I have seen two bad conclusions of Marianne by other hands.

Mr. Cumberland's *brusquerie* is not worth notice, nor did I remember it. Mr. Pennant's impetuosity you must overlook too; though I love your delicacy about your friend's memory. Nobody that knows you will suspect you of wanting it; but, in the ocean of books that overflows every day, who will recollect a thousandth part of what is in most of them? By the number of writers one should naturally suppose there were multitudes of readers; but if there are, which I doubt, the latter read only the productions of the day. Indeed, if they did read former publications, they would have no occasion to read the modern, which, like Mr. Pennant's, are borrowed wholesale from the more ancient: it is sad to say, that the borrowers add little new but mistakes. I have just been turning over Mr. Nichols's eight volumes of Select Poems, which he has swelled unreasonably with large collops of old authors, most of whom little deserved revivifying. I bought them for the biographical notes, in which I have found both inaccuracies

and blunders. For instance, one that made me laugh. In Lord Lansdown's Beauties he celebrates a lady, one Mrs. Vaughan. Mr. Nichols turns to the peerage of that time, and finds a Duke of Bolton married a Lady Ann Vaughan; he instantly sets her down for the lady in question, and introduces her to posterity as a beauty. Unluckily she was a monster, so ugly, that the Duke, then Marquis of Winchester, being forced by his father to marry her for her great fortune, was believed never to have consummated, and parted from her as soon as his father died; but, if our predecessors are exposed to these misrepresentations, what shall we be, when not only all private history is detailed in the newspapers, but scarce ever with tolerable fidelity! I have long said, that if a paragraph in a newspaper contains a word of truth, it is sure to be accompanied with two or three blunders; yet, who will believe that papers published in the face of the whole town should be nothing but magazines of lies, every one of which fifty persons could contradict and disprove? Yet so it certainly is, and future history will probably be ten times falser than all preceding. Adieu! Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 23, 1782.

I HAVE been more dilatory than usual, dear Sir, in replying to your last; but it called for no particular answer, nor have I now anything worth telling you. Mr. Gough and Mr. Nichols dined with me on Saturday last. I lent the former three-and-twenty drawings of monuments out of Mr. Lethieullier's books, for his large work, which will be a magnificent one. Mr. Nichols is, as you say, a very rapid editor, and I must commend him for being a very accurate one. I scarce ever saw a book so correct as his Life of Mr. Bowyer. I wish it deserved the pains he has bestowed on it every way, and that he would not dub so many men *great*. I have known several of his *heroes*, who were very *little* men. Dr. Mead had nothing but pretensions; and Philip Carteret

Webb was a sorry knave, with still less foundation. To what a slender total do those shrink who are the idols of their own age! How very few are known at all at the end of the next century! But there is a chapter in Voltaire that would cure anybody of being a great man even in his own eyes. It is a chapter in which a Chinese goes into a bookseller's shop, and marvels at not finding any of his own country's classics. It is a chapter that ought never to be out of the sight of any vain author. I have just got the catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Museum. It is every way piteously dear; the method is extremely puzzling, and the contents chiefly rubbish: who would give a rush for Dr. Birch's correspondence? many of the pieces are in print. In truth, I set little store by a collection of manuscripts. A work must be of little value that never could get into print; I mean, if it has existed half a century. The articles that diverted me most were an absolute novelty; I knew Henry VIII. was a royal author, but not a royal quack. There are several receipts of his own, and this delectable one amongst others. "The King's Grace's oyntement made at St. James's, to coole, and dry, and comfort the ——." Another, to the same purpose, was devised at Cawoode—was not that an episcopal palace? How devoutly was the head of the church employed! I hope that you have recovered your spirits; and that summer, which is arrived at last, will make a great amendment in you.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 16, 1782.

IF this letter reaches your lordship, I believe it must be conveyed by a dove; for we are all under water, and a postman has not where to set the sole of his foot. They tell me, that in the north you have not been so drowned, which will be very fortunate; for in these parts everything is to be apprehended for the corn, the sheep, and the camps: but, in truth, all kinds of prospects are most gloomy, and even

in lesser lights uncomfortable. Here we cannot stir, but armed for battle. Mr. Potts, who lives at Mr. Hindley's, was attacked and robbed last week at the end of Gunnersbury-lane, by five footpads who had two blunderbusses. Lady Browne and I do continue going to Twickenham-park; but I don't know how long it will be prudent, nor whether it is so now.

I have not been at Park-place, for Mr. Conway is never there, at least only for a night or two. His regiment was reviewed yesterday at Ashford-common, but I did not go to see it. In truth, I have so little taste for common sights, that I never yet did see a review in my life: I was in town last week, yet saw not Monsieur de Grasse;¹ nor have seen the giant or the dwarf.

Poor Mrs. Clive is certainly very declining, but has been better of late; and, which I am glad of, thinks herself better. All visions that comfort one are desirable: the conditions of mortality do not bear being pryed into; nor am I an admirer of that philosophy that scrutinizes into them: the philosophy of deceiving one's self is vastly preferable. What signifies anticipating what we cannot prevent?

I do not pretend to send your lordship any news, for I do not know a tittle, nor inquire. Peace is the sole event of which I wish to hear. For private news, I have outlived almost all the world with which I was acquainted, and have no curiosity about the next generation, scarce more than about the twentieth century. I wish I was less indifferent, for the sake of the few with whom I correspond,—your lordship in particular, who are always so good and partial to me, and on whom I should indubitably wait, were I fit to take a long journey; but as I walk no better than a tortoise, I make a conscience of not incommodating my friends, whom I should only confine at home. Indeed both my feet and hands are so lame, that I now scarce ever dine abroad. Being so an-

¹ The Comte de Grasse, the admiral of the French fleet, which Rodney defeated on the 12th of April 1782, and who had struck his flag in that engagement to the *Barfleur*, and surrendered himself to Sir Samuel Hood, landed at Portsmouth, as a prisoner of war, on the 5th of August.
—E.

tiquated and insipid, I will release your lordship; and am, with my unalterable respects to Lady Strafford, your lordship's most devoted humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 20, 1782.

You know I am too reasonable to expect to hear from you when you are so overwhelmed in business, or to write when I have nothing upon earth to say. I would come to town, but am to have company on Thursday, and am engaged with Lady Cecilia at Ditton on Friday, and on Monday I am to dine and pass the day at Sion-hill; and, as I am twenty years older than anybody of my age, I am forced to rest myself between my parties. I feel this particularly at this moment, as the allied houses of Lucan and Althorpe have just been breakfasting here, and I am sufficiently fatigued.

I have not been at Oatlands for years; for consider I cannot walk, much less climb a precipice; and the Duke of Newcastle has none of the magnificence of petty princes in a romance or in Germany, of furnishing calashes to those who visit his domains. He is not undetermined about selling the place; but besides that nobody is determined to buy it, he must have Lord Lincoln's consent.

I saw another proud prince yesterday, your cousin Seymour from Paris, and his daughter. She was so dishevelled, that she looked like a pattern doll that had been tumbled at the Custom-house.

I am mighty glad that war is gone to sleep like a paroli at faro, and that the rain has cried itself to death; unless the first would dispose of all the highwaymen, footpads, and house-breakers, or the latter drown them, for nobody hereabouts dare stir after dusk, nor be secure at home. When you have any interval of your little campaigns, I shall hope to see you and Lady Ailesbury here.

¹ Now first printed.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 15, 1782.

I CONGRATULATE your lordship on the acquisition of a valuable picture by Jameson. The Memoirs of your Society I have not yet received; but, when I do, shall read it with great pleasure, and beg your lordship to offer my grateful thanks to the members, and to accept them yourself.

No literature appears here at this time of the year. London, I hear, is particularly empty. Not only the shooting season is begun, but, till about seventeen days ago, there was nothing but incessant rains, and not one summer's day. A catalogue, in two quartos, of the Manuscripts in the British Museum, and which thence does not seem to contain great treasures, and Mr. Tyrwhitt's book on the Rowleian controversy, which is reckoned completely victorious, are all the novelties I have seen since I left town. War and politics occupy those who think at all — no great number neither; and most of those, too, are content with the events of the day, and forget them the next. But it is too like an old man to blame the age; and, as I have nothing to do with it, I may as well be silent and let it please itself. I am, with great regard, my lord, yours, &c.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1782.

I HAD not time yesterday to say what I had to say about your coming hither. I should certainly be happy to see you and Lady Ailesbury at any time: but it would be unconscionable to expect it when you have scarce a whole day in a month to pass at your own house, and to look after your own works. Friends, I know, lay as great stress upon trifles as upon serious points; but as there never was a more sincere

¹ Now first collected.

attachment than mine, so it is the most reasonable one too, for I always think for you more than myself. Do whatever you have to do, and be assured, that is what I like best that you should do. The present hurry cannot last always. Your present object is to show how much more fit you are for your post¹ than any other man; by which you will do infinite service too, and will throw a great many private acts of good-nature and justice into the account. Do you think I would stand in the way of any of these things? and that I am not aware of them? Do you think about me? If it suits you at any moment, come. Except Sunday next, when I am engaged to dine abroad, I have nothing to do till the middle of October, when I shall go to Nuneham; and, going or coming, may possibly catch you at Park-place.

I am not quite credulous about your turning smoke into gold:² it is perhaps because I am ignorant. I like Mr. Mapleton extremely; and though I have lived so long that I have little confidence, I think you could not have chosen one more likely to be faithful. I am sensible that my kind of distrust would prevent all great enterprises; and yet I cannot but fear, that unless one gives one's self up entirely to the pursuit of a new object, this risk must be doubled. But I will say no more; for I do not even wish to dissuade you, as I am sure I understand nothing of the matter, and therefore mean no more than to keep your discretion awake.

The tempest of Monday night alarmed me too for the fleet: and as I have nothing to do but to care, I feel for individuals as well as for the public, and think of all those who may be lost, and of all those who may be made miserable by such loss. Indeed, I care most for individuals; for as to the public, it seems to be totally insensible to everything! I know nothing worth repeating; and having now answered all your letter, shall bid you good night.

Yours ever.

¹ Mr. Conway was now commander-in-chief.

² Alluding to the coke-ovens, for which Mr. Conway afterwards obtained a patent.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 3, 1782.

I DID think it long since I had the honour of hearing from your lordship; but, conscious how little I could repay you with any entertainment, I waited with patience. In fact, I believe summer-correspondences often turn on complaints of want of news. It is unlucky that that is generally the season of correspondence, as it is of separation. People assembled in a capital contrive to furnish matter, but then they have not occasion to write it. Summer, being the season of campaigns, ought to be more fertile: I am glad when that is not the case, for what is an account of a battle but a list of burials? Vultures and birds of prey might write with pleasure to their correspondents in the Alps of such events; but they ought to be melancholy topics to those who have no beaks or talons. At this moment if I was an epicure among the sharks, I should rejoice that General Elliot has just sent the carcasses of fifteen hundred Spaniards down to market under Gibraltar;¹ but I am more pleased that he dispatched boats, and saved some of those whom he had over-set. What must a man of so much feeling have suffered at being forced to do his duty so well as he has done! I remember hearing such another humane being, that brave old admiral Sir Charles Wager, say, that in his life he had never killed a fly.

This demolition of the Spanish armada is a great event: a very good one if it prevents a battle between Lord Howe and the combined fleets, as I should hope; and yet better if it produces peace, the only political crisis to which I look with eagerness. Were that happy moment arrived, there is ample matter to employ our great men, if we have any, in retrieving the affairs of this country, if they are to be re-

¹ On the 13th of September, when General Elliot repulsed the grand attack made on Gibraltar; and Captain Curtis, of the *Brilliant*, who commanded the marine brigade upon the occasion, and his men, saved numbers of the Spaniards, at the hazard of their own lives.—E.

trieved. But though our sedentary politicians write abundance of letters in the newspapers, full of plans of public spirit, I doubt the nation is not sober enough to set about its own work in earnest. When none reform themselves, little good is to be expected. We see by the excess of highwaymen how far evils will go before any attempt is made to cure them. I am sure, from the magnitude of this inconvenience, that I am not talking merely like an old man. I have lived here above thirty years, and used to go everywhere round at all hours of the night without any precaution. I cannot now stir a mile from my own house after sunset without one or two servants with blunderbusses. I am not surprised your lordship's pheasants were stolen: a woman was taken last Saturday night loaded with nine geese, and they say has impeached a gang of fourteen housebreakers—but these are undergraduates; when they should have taken their doctor's degrees, they would not have piddled in such little game. Those regius-professors the nabobs have taught men not to plunder for farthings.

I am very sensible of your lordship's kindness to my nephew Mr. Cholmondeley. He is a sensible, well-behaved young man, and, I trust, would not have abused your goodness. Mr. Mason writes to me, that he shall be at York at the end of this month. I was to have gone to Nuneham; but the house is so little advanced, that it is a question whether they can receive me. Mason, I doubt, has been idle there. I am sure, if he found no muses there, he could pick up none at Oxford, where there is not so much as a bedmaker that ever lived in a muse's family. Tonton begs his duty to all the lambs, and trusts that Lady Strafford will not reject his homage.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 5, 1782.

I HAD begun a letter in answer to another person, which I have broken off on receiving yours, dear Sir. I am exceedingly concerned at the bad account you give of yourself;

and yet, on weighing it, I flatter myself that you are not only out of all danger, but have had a fortunate crisis, which I hope will prolong your life. A bile surmounted is a present from nature to us, who are not boys: and though you speak as weary of life from sufferings, and yet with proper resignation and philosophy, it does not frighten me, as I know that any humour and gathering, even in the gum, is strangely dispiriting. I do not write merely from sympathising friendship, but to beg that if your bile is not closed or healing, you will let me know; for the bark is essential, yet very difficult to have genuine. My apothecary here, I believe, has some very good, and I will send you some directly.

I will thank you, but not trouble you with an account of myself. I had no fit of the gout, nor any new complaint; but it is with the utmost difficulty I keep the humour from laming me entirely, especially in my hands, which are a mine of chalk-stones; but, as they discharge themselves, I flatter myself they prevent heavier attacks.

I do take in the European Magazine, and think it in general one of the best. I forgot what was said of me: sometimes I am corrected, sometimes flattered, and care for neither. I have not seen the answer to Mr. Warton, but will send for it.

I shall not be sorry on my own account if Dr. Lort quits Lambeth, and comes to Saville-row, which is in my neighbourhood; but I did not think a wife was the stall where he would set up his staff.

You have given me the only reason why I cannot be quite sorry that you do not print what you had prepared for the press. No kind intention towards me from you surprises me — but then I want no new proofs. My wish, for whatever shall be the remainder of my life, is to be quiet and forgotten. Were my course to recommence, and one could think in youth as one does at sixty-five, I have no notion I should have courage to appear as an author. Do you know, too, that I look on fame now as the idlest of all visions? but this theme would lead me too far.

I collect a new comfort from your letter. The *writing* is

much better than in most of your latest letters. If your pain were not ceased, you could not have formed your letters so firmly and distinctly. I will not say more, lest I should draw you into greater fatigue; let me have but a single line in answer.

Yours most cordially.¹

TO GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.²

Strawberry Hill, May 10, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

FOR *so* you must allow me to call you, after your being so kind as to send me so valuable and agreeable a present as your translation of Horace³ — I wish compliment had left any term uninvaded, of which sincerity could make use without suspicion. Those would be precisely what I would employ in commending your poem; and, if they proved too simple to content my gratitude, I would be satisfied with an offering to truth, and wait for a nobler opportunity of sacrificing to the warmer virtue. If I have not lost my memory, your translation is the best I have ever seen of that difficult epistle. Your expression is easy and natural, and when requisite, poetic. In short, it has a prime merit, it has the air of an original.

Your hypothesis in your commentary is very ingenious. I do not know whether it is true, which *now* cannot be known; but if the scope of the epistle was, as you suppose, to hint in a delicate and friendly manner to the elder of Piso's sons that

¹ This is the last letter addressed by Walpole to Mr. Cole; who died within six weeks of the date of it. The event is thus recorded by Mr. Gough, in the second volume of his edition of Camden's *Britannia*. "At Milton, a small village on the Ely road, was the retirement of the Rev. William Cole. Here, Dec. 16, 1782, in his sixty-eighth year, he closed a life spent in learned research into the history and antiquities of this county in particular, which nothing but his declining state of health prevented this work from sharing the benefit of. He was buried under the belfry of St. Clement's church in Cambridge."—E.

² Now first collected.

³ His translation of Horace's *Epistola ad Pisonem de Arte Poeticâ*.—E.

he had written a bad tragedy, Horace had certainly executed his plan with great address; and, I think, nobody will be able to show that anything in the poem clashes with your idea. Nay, if he went farther, and meant to disguise his object, by giving his epistle the air of general rules on poetry and tragedy, he achieved both purposes; and while the youth his friend was at once corrected and put to no shame, all other readers were kept in the dark, except you, and diverted to different scents.¹

Excuse my commenting your comment, but I had no other way of proving that I really approve both your version and criticism than by stating the grounds of my applause. If you have wrested the sense of the original to favour your own hypothesis, I have not been able to discover your art; for I do not perceive where it has been employed. If you have given Horace more meaning than he was intitled to, you have conferred a favour on him, for you have made his whole epistle consistent, a beauty all the spectacles of all his commentators could not find out—but, indeed, *they* proceed on the profound laws of criticism, *you* by the laws of common sense, which, marching on a plain natural path, is very apt to arrive sooner at the goal, than they who travel on the Appian Way; which was a very costly and durable work, but is very uneasy, and at present does not lead to a quarter of the places to which it was originally directed.

I am, Sir, with great regard, your most
obedient and obliged humble servant.

¹ It had been the opinion of Bishop Hurd, that “it was the proper and sole purpose of Horace simply to criticise the Roman drama;” but Mr. Colman assumed a contrary ground. “If my partiality to my lamented friend, Mr. Colman,” says Dr. Joseph Warton, “does not mislead me, I should think his account of the matter the most judicious of any yet published. He conceives that the elder Piso had written, or meditated, a poetical work—probably, a tragedy, and had communicated his piece in confidence to Horace; but Horace, either disapproving of the work, or doubting of the poetical faculties of the elder Piso, or both, wished to dissuade him from all thoughts of publication. With this view he wrote his Epistle, addressing it, with a courtliness and delicacy perfectly agreeable to his acknowledged character, indifferently to the whole family, the father and his two sons.”—E.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.¹

Strawberry Hill, May 12, 1783.

MY LORD,

I DID not know, till I received the honour of your lordship's letter, that any obstruction had been given to your charter. I congratulate your lordship and the Society on the defeat of that opposition, which does not seem to have been a liberal one. The pursuit of national antiquities has rarely been an object, I believe, with any university: why should they obstruct others from marching in that track? I have often thought the English Society of Antiquaries have gone out of their way when they meddled with Roman remains, especially if not discovered within our island. Were I to speak out, I should own that I hold most reliques of the Romans that have been found in Britain, of little consequence, unless relating to such emperors as visited us. Provincial armies stationed in so remote and barbarous a quarter as we were then, acted little, produced little worth being remembered. Tombstones erected to legionary officers and their families, now dignified by the title of *inscriptions*; and banks and ditches that surrounded camps, which we understand much better by books and plans, than by such faint fragments, are given with much pomp, and tell us nothing new. Your lordship's new foundation seems to proceed on a much more rational and more useful plan. The biography of the illustrious of your country will be an honour to Scotland, to those illustrious, and to the authors: and may contribute considerably to the general history; for the investigation of particular lives may bring out many anecdotes that may unfold secrets of state, or explain passages in such histories as have been already written; especially as the manners of the times may enter into private biography, though before Voltaire *manners* were rarely weighed in general history, though very often the sources of considerable events. I shall be very happy to see such lives as shall be published, while I remain alive.

¹ Now first collected.

I cannot contribute anything of consequence to your lordship's meditated account of John Law. I have heard many anecdotes of him, though none that I can warrant, particularly that of the duel for which he fled early.¹ I met the other day with an account in some French literary gazette, I forget which, of his having carried off the wife of another man. Lady Catherine Law, his wife, lived, during his power in France, in the most stately manner. Your lordship knows, to be sure, that he died and is buried at Venice. I have two or three different prints of him, and an excellent head of him in crayons by Rosalba, the best of her portraits. It is certainly very like, for, were the flowing wig converted into a female head-dress, it would be the exact resemblance of Lady Wallingford, his daughter, whom I see frequently at the Duchess of Montrose's, and who has by no means a look of the age to which she is arrived. Law was a very extraordinary man, but not at all an estimable one.

I don't remember whether I ever told your lordship that there are many charters of your ancient kings preserved in the Scots College at Paris, and probably many other curiosities. I think I did mention many paintings of the old house of Lenox in the ancient castle at Aubigny.

¹ Evelyn, in his Diary, gives the following account of this duel:—"April 22, 1694. A very young man, named Wilson, the younger son of one who had not above two hundred pounds a year estate, lived in the garb and equipage of the richest nobleman, for house, furniture, coaches, saddle-horses, and kept a table and all things accordingly, redeemed his father's estate, and gave portions to his sisters, being challenged by one Laws, a Scotchman, was killed in a duel, not fairly. The quarrel arose from his taking away his own sister from lodging in a house where this Laws had a mistress; which the mistress of the house thinking a disparagement to it, and losing by it, instigated Laws to this duel. He was taken, and condemned for murder. The mystery is, how this so young a gentleman, very sober and of good fame, could live in such an expensive manner; it could not be discovered by all possible industry, or entreaty of his friends to make him reveal it. It did not appear that he was kept by women, play, coining, padding, or dealing in chemistry; but he would sometimes say, that, if he should live ever so long, he had wherewith to maintain himself in the same manner. This was a subject of much discourse." Law was found guilty of murder, and sentence of death was passed upon him. He, however, found means to escape, and got clear off to the Continent. A reward of fifty pounds for his apprehension appeared in the London Gazette of the 7th of January 1695.—E.

TO THE HON. GEORGE HARDINGE.

Berkeley Square, May 17, 1783.

THOUGH I shall not be fixed at Strawberry on this day fortnight, I will accept your offer, dear Sir, because my time is more at my disposal than yours, and you may not have any other day to bestow upon me later. I thank you for your second, which I shall read as carefully as I did the former. It is not your fault if you have not yet made Sir Thomas Rumbold white as driven snow to me.¹ Nature has providentially given us a powerful antidote to eloquence, or the criminal that has the best advocate would escape. But, when rhetoric and logic stagger my lords the judges, in steps prejudice, and, without one argument that will make a syllogism, confutes Messrs. Demosthenes, Tully, and Hardinge, and makes their lordships see as clearly as any old woman in England, that *belief* is a much better rule of *faith* than *demonstration*. This is just my case: I do believe, nay, and I will believe, that no man ever went to India with honest intentions. If he returns with 100,000*l.* it is plain that I was in the right. But I have still a stronger proof; my Lord Coke says, "Set a thief to catch a thief;" my Lord Advocate² says, "Sir Thomas is a rogue:" *ergo*.—I cannot give so complete an answer to the rest of your note, as I trust I have done to your pleadings, because the latter is in print, and your note is manuscript. Now, unfortunately, I cannot read half of it; for, give me leave to say, that either your hand or my spectacles are so bad, that I generally guess at your meaning rather than decipher it, and this time the context has not served me well.

¹ The bill of pains and penalties against Sir Thomas Rumbold, late governor of Madras, was at this time in its progress through the House of Commons. On the 1st of July, the further proceedings upon the bill were adjourned to the 1st of October; by which means the whole business fell to the ground.—E.

² Mr. Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville. "I think him," said Mr. Wilberforce, in June 1781, "the first speaker on the ministerial side in the House of Commons, and there is a manliness in his character which prevents his running away from the question; he grants all his adversaries' premises, and fights them upon their own ground." *Life*, vol. i. p. 21.—E.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, June 24, 1783.

THOUGH your lordship's partiality extends even to my letters, you must perceive that they grow as antiquated as the writer. News are the soul of letters: when we give them a body of our own invention, it is as unlike to life as a statue. I have withdrawn so much from the world, that the newspapers know everything before me, especially since they have usurped the province of telling everything, private as well as public; and consequently a great deal more than I should wish to know, or like to report. When I do hear the transactions of much younger people, they do not pass from my ears into my memory; nor does your lordship interest yourself more about them than I do. Yet still, when one reduces one's department to such narrow limits, one's correspondence suffers by it. However, as I desire to show only my gratitude and attachment, not my wit, I shall certainly obey your lordship as long as you are content to read my letters, after I have told you fairly how little they can entertain you.

For imports of French, I believe we shall have few more. They have not ruined us so totally by the war, much less enriched themselves so much by it, but that they who have been here, complained so piteously of the expensiveness of England, that probably they will deter others from a similar jaunt; nor, such is their fickleness, are the French constant to anything but admiration of themselves. Their Anglomanie I hear has mounted, or descended, from our customs to our persons. English people are in fashion at Versailles. A Mr. Ellis,¹

¹ George Ellis, Esq.; afterwards a contributor to "The Rolliad;" a coadjutor of Mr. Canning and Mr. Frere in "The Anti-Jacobin," and editor of "Specimens of Ancient English Romances," &c. He died in 1815, at the age of seventy. Sir Walter Scott, in the introduction to the fifth canto of Marmion, thus addresses him—

"Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters as in life approved,
Example honour'd and beloved;

who wrote some pretty verses at Bath two or three years ago, is a favourite there. One who was so, or may be still, the *Beau Dillon*, came upon a very different errand; in short, to purchase at any price a book written by Linguet, which was just coming out, called "*Antoinette*." That will tell your lordship why the *Beau Dillon*¹ was the messenger.

Monsieur de Guignes and his daughters came hither; but it was at eight o'clock at night in the height of the deluge. You may be sure I was much flattered by such a visit! I was forced to light candles to show them anything; and must have lighted the moon to show them the views. If this is their way of seeing England, they might as well look at it with an opera-glass from the shore of Calais.

Mr. Mason is to come to me on Sunday, and will find me mighty busy in making my lock of hay, which is not yet cut. I don't know why, but people are always more anxious about their hay than their corn, or twenty other things that cost them more. I suppose my Lord Chesterfield, or some such dictator, made it fashionable to care about one's hay. Nobody betrays solicitude about getting in his rents.

We have exchanged spring and summer for autumn and winter, as well as day for night. If religion or law enjoined people to love light, and prospects, and verdure, I should not wonder if perverseness made us hate them; no, nor if society made us prefer living always in town to solitude and beauty. But that is not the case. The most fashionable

Dear Ellis! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart,—
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend!"—E.

¹ Colonel Edward Dillon. "I was particularly acquainted with him," says Wraxall, in his posthumous Memoirs; "he descended, I believe, collaterally from the noble Irish family of the Earls of Roscommon, though his father carried on the trade of a wine-merchant at Bourdeaux: but he was commonly called 'Le Comte Edouard Dillon,' and 'Le Beau Dillon.' In my estimation, he possessed little pretension to the latter epithet; but he surpassed most men in stature, like Lord Whitworth, Lord Hugh Seymour, and the other individuals on whom Marie Antoinette cast a favourable eye. That she showed him some imprudent marks of predilection at a ball, which, when they took place, excited comment, is true; but they prove only indiscretion and levity on her part."—E.

hurry into the country at Christmas and Easter, let the weather be ever so bad; and the finest ladies, who will go no whither till eleven at night, certainly pass more tiresome hours in London alone than they would in the country. But all this is no business of mine: they do what they like, and so do I; and I am exceedingly tolerant about people who are perfectly indifferent to me. The sun and the seasons were not gone out of fashion when I was young; and I may do what I will with them now I am old: for fashion is fortunately no law but to its devotees. Were I five-and-twenty, I dare to say I should think every whim of my contemporaries very wise, as I did then. In one light I am always on the side of the young, for they only silently despise those who do not conform to their ordonnances; but age is very apt to be angry at the change of customs, and partial to others no better founded. It is happy when we are occupied by nothing more serious. It is happy for a nation when mere fashions are a topic that can employ its attention; for, though dissipation may lead to graver moments, it commences with ease and tranquillity: and they at least who live before the scene shifts are fortunate, considering and comparing themselves with the various regions who enjoy no parallel felicity. I confess my reflections are *couleur de rose* at present. I did not much expect to live to see peace, without far more extensive ruin than has fallen on us. I will not probe futurity in search of less agreeable conjectures. Prognosticators may see many seeds of dusky hue; but I am too old to look forwards. Without any omens, common sense tells one, that in the revolution of ages nations must have unprosperous periods. But why should I torment myself for what may happen in twenty years after my death, more than for what may happen in two hundred? Nor shall I be more interested in the one than in the other. This is no indifference for my country: I wish it could always be happy; but so I do to all other countries. Yet who could ever pass a tranquil moment, if such future speculations vexed him?

Adieu, my good lord! I doubt this letter has more marks of senility than the one I announced at the beginning. When

I had no news to send you, it was no reason for tiring you with commonplaces. But your lordship's indulgence spoils me. Does not it look as if I thought, that, because you commend my letters, you would like whatever I say? Will not Lady Strafford think that I abuse your patience? I ask both your pardons, and am to both a most devoted humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 1, 1783.

It would be great happiness indeed to me, my dear lord, if such nothings as my letters could contribute to any part of your lordship's; but as your own partiality bestows their chief merit on them, you see they owe more to your friendship than to the writer. It is not my interest to depreciate them; much less to undermine the foundation of their sole worth. Yet it would be dishonest not to warn your lordship, that if my letters have had any intrinsic recommendation, they must lose of it every day. Years and frequent returns of gout have made a ruin of me. Dulness, in the form of indolence, grows upon me. I am inactive, lifeless, and so indifferent to most things, that I neither inquire after nor remember any topics that might enliven my letters. Nothing is so insipid as my way of passing my time. But I need not specify what my letters speak. They can have no spirit left; and would be perfectly inanimate, if attachment and gratitude to your lordship were as liable to be extinguished by old age as our more amusing qualities. I make no new connections; but cherish those that remain with all the warmth of youth and the piety of grey hairs.

The weather here has been, and is, with very few intervals, sultry to this moment. I think it has been of service to me; though by overheating myself I had a few days of lameness. The harvest is half over already all round us; and so pure, that not a poppy or cornflower is to be seen. Every field seems to have been weeded like Brisco's bowling-green. If Ceres, who is at least as old as many of our fashionable ladies,

loves tricking herself out in flowers as they do, she must be mortified: and with more reason; for she looks well always with top-knots of ultramarine and vermillion, which modern goddesses do not for half so long as they think they do. As Providence showers so many blessings on us, I wish the peace may confirm them! Necessary I am sure it was; and when it cannot restore us, where should we have been had the war continued? Of our situation and prospect I confess my opinion is melancholy, not from present politics but from past. We flung away the most brilliant position, I doubt, for a long season! With politics I have totally done. I wish the present ministers may last; for I think better of their principles than of those of their opponents (with a few salvos on both sides), and so I do of their abilities. But it would be folly in me to concern myself about new generations. How little a way can I see of their progress!

I am rather surprised at the new Countess of Denbigh. How could a woman be ambitious of resembling Prometheus, to be pawed and clawed and gnawed by a vulture?¹ I beg your earldom's pardon; but I could not conceive that a coronet was so very tempting!

Lady Browne is quite recovered, unless she relapses from what we suffer at Twickenham-park from a Lord Northesk,² an old seaman, who is come to Richmond on a visit to the Duke of Montrose. I think the poor man must be out of his senses, at least he talks us out of ours. It is the most incessant and incoherent rhapsody that ever was heard. He sits by the card-table, and pours on Mrs. N * * * * all that ever happened in his voyages or his memory. He details the ship's allowance, and talks to her as if she was his first-mate. Then in the mornings he carries his daughter to town to see St. Paul's, and the Tower, and Westminster-abbey; and at night disgorges all he has seen, till we don't know the ace of spades from Queen Elizabeth's pocket-pistol in the armoury. Mercy

¹ An allusion to Lord Denbigh's figure, and his arms blazoned on a spread eagle.—E.

² George, sixth Earl of Northesk, a naval officer of distinction, who attained the rank of admiral of the white. He died in 1792.—E.

on us ! And mercy on your lordship too ! Why should you be stunned with that alarum ? Have you had your earthquake, my lord ? Many have had theirs. I assure you I have had mine. Above a week ago, when broad awake, the doors of the cabinet by my bed-side rattled, without a breath of wind. I imagined somebody was walking on the leads, or had broken into the room under me. It was between four and five in the morning. I rang my bell. Before my servant could come it happened again ; and was exactly like the horizontal tremor I felt from the earthquake some years ago. As I had rung once, it is plain I was awake. I rang again ; but heard nothing more. I am quite persuaded there was some commotion ; nor is it surprising that the dreadful eruptions of fire on the coasts of Italy and Sicily¹ should have occasioned some alteration that has extended faintly hither, and contributed to the heats and mists that have been so extraordinary. George Montagu said of our last earthquake, that it was so tame you might have stroked it. It is comfortable to live where one can reason on them without dreading them ! What satisfaction should you have in having erected such a monument of your taste, my lord, as Wentworth Castle, if you did not know but it might be overturned in a moment and crush you ? Sir William Hamilton is expected : he has been groping in all those devastations. Of all vocations I would not be a professor of earthquakes ! I prefer studies that are *couleur de rose* ; nor would ever think of calamities, if I can do nothing to relieve them. Yet this is a weakness of mind that I do not defend. They are more respectable who can behold philosophically the great theatre of events, or rather this little theatre of ours ! In some ampler sphere, they may look on the catastrophe of Messina² as we do on kicking to pieces an ant-hill.

¹ In the course of this year a series of violent earthquakes occurred in Calabria and Sicily. In February, the city of Casal Nuova was entirely swallowed up ; and the Princess Gerace Grimaldi, with more than four thousand persons, perished in an instant. The inhabitants of Scylla, who, headed by their Prince, had descended from the rock and taken refuge on the sea-shore, were all washed away by an enormous wave, on its return from the land which it had inundated.—E.

² Messina, and all the northern parts of Sicily, suffered greatly by the convulsions of nature alluded to in the preceding note.—E.

Bless me ! what a farrago is my letter ! It is like the extracts of books in a monthly magazine ! I had no right to censure poor Lord Northesk's ramblings ! Lady Strafford will think he has infected me. Good-night, my dear lord and lady ! Your ever devoted.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 15, 1783.

THE address from the Volunteers is curious indeed, and upon the first face a little Irish. What ! would they throw off our Parliament, and yet amend it ? It is like correcting a question in the House of Commons, and then voting against it. But I suppose they rather mean to increase confusion here, that we may not be at leisure to impede their progress ; at least this may be the intention of the leaders. Large bodies are only led by being in earnest themselves, when their leaders are not so : but my head is not clear enough to apply it to different matters, nor could I do any good if it were. Our whole system is become a disjointed chaos, and time must digest it, or blow it up shortly. I see no way into it, nor expect anything favourable but from chance, that often stops confusion on a sudden. To restore us by any system, it would require a single head furnished with wisdom, temper, address, fortitude, full and undivided power, and sincere patriotism divested of all personal views. Where is that prodigy to be found ? and how should it have the power, if it had all the rest ? And if it had the power, how could it be divested of that power again ? And if it were not, how long would it retain its virtues ? Power and wisdom would soon unite, like Antony and Augustus, to annihilate their colleague virtue, for being a poor creature like Lepidus. In short, the mass of matter is too big for me : I am going out of the world, and cannot trouble myself about it. I do think of your part in it, and wish to preserve you where you are, for the benefits that you may contribute. I have a high opinion of Mr. Fox, and believe that by frankness you may become real friends, which

would be greatly advantageous to the country. There is no competition in my mind where you are concerned : but Fox is the minister with whom I most wish you united,—indeed, to all the rest I am indifferent or adverse : but, besides his superior abilities, he has a liberality of acting that is to my taste ; it is like my father's plainness, and has none of the paltry little finesses of a statesman.

Your parties do not tempt me, because I am not well enough to join in them : nor yet will they stop me, though I had rather find only you and Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer. I am not seriously ill ; nay, am better upon the whole than I was last year : but I perceive decays enough in myself to be sensible that the scale may easily be inclined to the worst side. This observation makes me very indifferent to everything that is not much at my heart. Consequently what concerns you is, as it has always been for above forty years, a principal object. Adieu !

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, August 27, 1783.

THOUGH I begin my letter on and have dated it Sunday, I recollect that it may miss you if you go to town on Tuesday, and therefore I shall not send it to the post till tomorrow. I can give you but an indifferent account of myself. I went to Lord Dacre's ; but whether the heat and fatigue were too much for me, or whether the thunder turned me sour, for I am at least as weak as small-beer, I came back with the gout in my left hand and right foot. The latter confined me for three days ; but, though my ancle is still swelled, I do not stay in my house : however I am frightened, and shall venture no more expeditions yet ; for my hands and feet are both so lame, that I am neither comfortable to myself or anybody else, abroad, when I must confine *them*, stay by myself or risk pain, which the least fatigue gives me.

At this moment I have a worse embargo even than lame-

¹ Now first printed.

ness on me. The Prince d'Hessenstein has written to offer me a visit — I don't know when. I have just answered his note, and endeavoured to limit its meaning to the shortest sense I could, by proposing to give him a dinner or a breakfast. I would keep my bed rather than crack our northern French together for twelve hours.

I know nothing upon earth but my own disasters. Another is, that all yesterday I thought all my gold-fish stolen. I am not sure that they are not; but they tell me they keep at the bottom of the water from the hot weather. It is all to be laded out to-morrow morning, and then I shall know whether they are gone or boiled.

Whenever the weather cools to an English consistence, I will see you at Park-place or in town: but I think not at the former before the end of next month, unless I recover more courage than I have at present; for if I was to get a real fit, and be confined to my bed in such sultry days, I should not have strength to go through it. I have just fixed three new benches round my bowling-green, that I may make four journeys of the tour. Adieu!

Monday morning.

As I was rising this morning, I received an express from your daughter, that she will bring Madame de Cambis and Lady Melbourne to dinner here to-morrow. I shall be vastly pleased with the party, but it puts Philip and Margaret to their wit's end to get them a dinner: nothing is to be had here; we must send to Richmond, and Kingston, and Brentford; I must borrow Mr. Ellis's cook, and somebody's confectioner, and beg somebody's fruit, for I have none of these of my own, nor know anything of the matter: but that is Philip and Margaret's affair, and not mine; and the worse the dinner is, the more Gothic Madame de Cambis will think it.

I have been emptying my pond, which was more in my head than the honour of my kitchen; and in the mud of the troubled water I have found all my gold, as Dunning and Barré did last year.¹ I have taken out fifteen young fish of

¹ In the preceding year, through the influence of Lord Shelburne, a

a year and a half old for Lady Ailesbury, and reserved them as an offering worthy of Amphitrite in the vase, in the cat's vase,¹ amidst the azure flowers that blow. They are too portly to be carried in a smelling-bottle in your pocket. I wish you could plan some way of a waterman's calling for them, and transporting them to Henley. They have not changed their colour, but will next year. How lucky it would be, should you meet your daughter about Turnham Green, and turn back with them !

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 12, 1783.

YOUR lordship tells me you hope my summer has glided pleasantly, like our Thames. I cannot say it has passed very pleasantly to me, though, like the Thames, dry and low ; for somehow or other I caught a rheumatic fever in the great heats, and cannot get rid of it. I have just been at Park-place and Nuneham, in hopes change of air would cure me ; but to no purpose. Indeed, as want of sleep is my chief complaint, I doubt I must make use of a very different and more disagreeable remedy, the air of London, the only place that I ever find agree with me when I am out of order. I was there for two nights a fortnight ago, and slept perfectly well. In vain has my predilection for Strawberry made me try to persuade myself that this was all fancy ; but, I fear, reasons that appear strong, though contrary to our inclinations, must be good ones. London at this time of year is as nauseous a drug as any in an apothecary's shop. I could find nothing at all to do, and so went to Astley's, which indeed was much beyond my expectation. I do not wonder any longer that Darius was chosen king by the instructions he gave to his horse ; nor that Caligula made his consul. Astley can make his dance minuets and hornpipes ; which is

considerable pension had been granted to Colonel Barré, and a peerage and pension to Mr. Dunning.—E.

¹ The china vase in which Walpole's favourite cat Selima was drowned. See Gray's Works, vol. i. p. 6.—E.

more extraordinary than to make them vote at an election, or act the part of a magistrate, which animals of less capacities can perform as dexterously as a returning officer or a master in chancery.—But I shall not have even Astley now: her Majesty the Queen of France, who has as much taste as Caligula, has sent for the whole *dramatis personæ* to Paris. Sir William Hamilton was at Park-place, and gave us dreadful accounts of Calabria: he looks much older, and has the patina of a bronze.

At Nuneham I was much pleased with the improvements both within doors and without. Mr. Mason was there; and, as he shines in every art, was assisting Mrs. Harcourt with his new discoveries in painting, by which he will unite miniature and oil. Indeed, she is a very apt and extraordinary scholar. Since our professors seem to have lost the art of colouring, I am glad at least that they have ungraduated assessors.

We have plenty and peace at last; consequently leisure for repairing some of our losses, if we have sense enough to set about the task. On what will happen I shall make no conjectures, as it is not likely I should see much of what is to come. Our enemies have humbled us enough to content them; and we have succeeded so ill in innovations, that surely we shall not tempt new storms in haste.

From this place I can send your lordship nothing new or entertaining; nor expect more game in town, whither nothing but search of health should carry me. Perhaps it is a vain chase at my age; but at my age one cannot trust to Nature's operating cures without aiding her; it is always time enough to abandon one's self when no care will palliate our decays. I hope your lordship and Lady Strafford will long be in no want of such attentions; nor should I have talked so much of my own cracks, had I had anything else to tell you. It would be silly to aim at vivacity when it is gone: and, though a lively old man is sometimes an agreeable being, a pretending old man is ridiculous. Aches and an apothecary cannot give one genuine spirits; 'tis sufficient if they do not make one peevish. Your lordship is so kind as to accept of me as

I am, and you shall find nothing more counterfeit in me than the sincere respect and gratitude with which I have the honour to be your lordship's most devoted humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1783.

My rheumatism, I thank your lordship, is certainly better, though not quite gone. It was very troublesome at night till I took the bark; but that medicine makes me sleep like opium.—But I will say no more about it, nothing is so troublesome as to talk of chronical complaints: has one any right to draw on the compassion of others, when one must renew the address daily and for months?

The aspect of Ireland is very tempestuous.¹ I doubt they will hurt us materially without benefiting themselves. If they obtain very short parliaments, they will hurt themselves more than us, by introducing a confusion that will prevent their improvements. Whatever country does adopt short parliaments, will, I am entirely persuaded, be forced to recur to their former practice; I mean, if the disorders introduced do not produce despotism of some sort or other. I am very sorry Mr. Mason concurs in trying to revive the Associations.²

¹ The Volunteer Corps of Ireland had long entertained projects for reforming the parliamentary representation of the country, and had appointed delegates for carrying that object into effect. In September they met at Dungannon, when a plan of reform was proposed and agreed upon, and the 10th of November fixed on for a Convention at Dublin of the representatives of the whole body of Volunteers. "Many gentlemen," says Mr. Hardy, in his *Memoirs of Lord Charlemont*, "must have seen a letter of Mr. Fox, then secretary of state, to General Burgoyne, at that time commander-in-chief in Ireland, on the subject of the Convention. It was written with the spirit of a patriot and wisdom of a true statesman. In his ardour for a parliamentary reform, he yielded, he said, to none of the Convention, but he dreaded the consequences of such a proceeding; and would, he added, lament it as the deepest misfortune of his life, if, by any untoward steps then taken, and whilst he was minister, the two kingdoms should be separated, or run the slightest risk of separation."—E.

² "The Yorkshire Association had been formed in 1779, from the gentry of moderate fortunes and the more substantial yeomen, under the pressure of those burdens which resulted from the war with America, with the view of obtaining, first, an economical, and then a parliament-

Methinks our state is so deplorable, that every healing measure ought to be attempted instead of innovations. For my own part, I expect nothing but distractions, and am not concerned to be so old. *I am* so old, that, were I disposed to novelties, I should think they little became my age. I should be ashamed, when my hour shall come, to be caught in a riot of country 'squires and parsons, and haranguing a mob with a shaking head. A leader of faction ought to be young and vigorous. If an aged gentleman does get an ascendant, he may be sure that younger men are counting on his exit, and only flatter him to succeed to his influence, while they are laughing at his misplaced activity. At least, these would be my thoughts, who of all things dread being a jest to the juvenile, if they find me out of my sphere.

I have seen Lord Carlisle's play, and it has a great deal of merit—perhaps more than your lordship would expect. The language and images are the best part, after the two principal scenes, which are really fine.¹

I did, as your lordship knows and says, always like and esteem Lady Fitzwilliam. I scarce know my lord; but, from what I have heard of him in the House of Lords, have conceived a good opinion of his sense: of his character I never heard any ill; which is a great testimonial in his favour,

any reform; but in the various changes which soon afterwards perplexed the political world, its first object was almost forgotten, and its most important character was the front of opposition which it now maintained against that powerful aristocracy which had long ruled the county with absolute dominion. It now declared against the Coalition administration." *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. i. p. 51.—E.

¹ Of Lord Carlisle's tragedy, entitled "*The Father's Revenge*," Dr. Johnson also entertained a favourable opinion. "Of the sentiments," he says, "I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery, I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy succeeding grief to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please: it is new, just, and delightful. With the characters, either as conceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer, who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the Archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause which a vicious churchman would have brought him." It was with reference to this tragedy, that Lord Byron regretted the flippant and unjust sarcasms against his noble relation, which he had admitted into the early editions of his "*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*," under the mistaken impression that Lord Carlisle had intentionally slighted him.—E.

when there are so many horrid characters, and when all that are conspicuous have their minutest actions tortured to depose against them.

You may be sure, my dear lord, that I heartily pity Lady Strafford's and your loss of four-legged friends. Sense and fidelity are wonderful recommendations; and when one meets with them, and can be confident that one is not imposed upon, I cannot think that the two additional legs are any drawback. At least I know that I have had friends who would never have vexed or betrayed me, if they had walked on all-fours.

I have no news to send your lordship; indeed I inquire for none, nor wish to hear any. Whence is any good to come? I am every day surprised at hearing people eager for news. If there is any, they are sure of hearing it. How can one be curious to know one does not know what; and perpetually curious to know? Has one nothing to do but to hear and relate something new?—And why can one care about nothing but what one does not know? And why is every event worth hearing, only because one has not heard it? Have not there been changes enough? divorces enough? bankruptcies and robberies enough? and, above all, lies enough?—No; or people would not be every day impatient for the newspaper. I own, I am glad on Sunday when there is no paper,¹ and no fresh lies circulating. Adieu, my good lord and lady! May you long enjoy your tranquillity, undisturbed by villainy, folly, and madness!

TO LADY BROWNE.²

Berkeley Square, Oct. 19, 1783.

As it is not fit my better-half should be ignorant of the state of her worse-half, lest the gossips of the neighbourhood should suspect we are parted; let them know, my life, that I

¹ What would Walpole say, if he could witness the alteration which has taken place in this respect since the year 1783?—E.

² Now first printed.

am much better to-day. I have had a good deal of fever, and a bad night on Wednesday; but the last was much better, and the fever is much diminished to-day. In short, I have so great an opinion of town-dried air, that I expect to be well enough to return to Twickenham on Monday; and, if I do, will call on you that evening; though I have not been out of my house yet. Indeed, it is unfortunate that so happy a couple, who have never exchanged a cross word, and who might claim the flitch of bacon, cannot be well—the one in town, the other in the country.

TO GOVERNOR POWNALL.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 27, 1783.

I AM extremely obliged to you, Sir, for the valuable communication made to me.¹ It is extremely so to me, as it does justice to a memory I revere to the highest degree; and I flatter myself that it would be acceptable to that part of the world that loves truth; and that part will be the majority, as fast as *they* pass away who have an interest in preferring falsehood. Happily, truth is longer-lived than the passions of individuals; and, when mankind are not misled, they can distinguish white from black. I myself do not pretend to be unprejudiced; I must be so to the best of fathers: I should be ashamed to be quite impartial. No wonder, then, Sir, if I am greatly pleased with so able a justification; yet I am not so blinded, but that I can discern solid reasons for admiring your defence. You have placed that defence on sound and *new* grounds; and, though very briefly, have very learnedly stated and distinguished the landmarks of our constitution, and the encroachments made on it, by justly referring the principles of liberty to the Saxon system, and by imputing the corruptions of it to the Norman. This was a great deal too deep for that superficial mountebank, Hume, to go; for a mountebank he was. He mounted a system in the garb of a

¹ The Governor's "Character of Sir Robert Walpole." It will be found among the original papers in Coxe's *Life of Sir Robert*.—E.

philosophic empiric, but dispensed no drugs but what he was authorised to vend by a royal patent, and which were full of Turkish opium. He had studied nothing relative to the English constitution before Queen Elizabeth, and had selected her most arbitrary acts to countenance those of the Stuarts: and even hers he misrepresented; for her worst deeds were levelled against the nobility, those of the Stuarts against the people. Hers, consequently, were rather an obligation to the people; for the most heinous part of despotism is, that it produces a thousand despots instead of one. Muley Moloch cannot lop off many heads with his own hands; at least, he takes those in his way, those of his courtiers: but his bashaws and viceroys spread destruction everywhere. The flimsy, ignorant, blundering manner in which Hume executed the reigns preceding Henry the Seventh, is a proof how little he had examined the history of our constitution.

I could say much, much more, Sir, in commendation of your work, were I not apprehensive of being biassed by the subject. Still, that it would not be from flattery, I will prove, by taking the liberty of making two objections; and they are only to the last page but one. Perhaps you will think that my first objection does show that I am too much biassed. I own I am sorry to see my father compared to Sylla. The latter was a sanguinary usurper, a monster; the former, the mildest, most forgiving, best-natured of men, and a *legal* minister. Nor, I fear, will the only light in which you compare them, stand the test. Sylla resigned his power voluntarily, insolently; perhaps timidly, as he might think he had a better chance of dying in his bed, if he retreated, than by continuing to rule by force. My father did not retire by his own option. He had lost the majority of the House of Commons. Sylla, you say, Sir, retired unimpeached; it is true, but covered with blood. My father was not *impeached*, in our strict sense of the word; but, to my great joy, he was in effect. A secret committee, a worse inquisition than a jury, was named; not to try him, but to sift his life for crimes: and out of such a jury, chosen in the dark, and not one of whom he might challenge, he had some determined enemies, many opponents, and but

two he could suppose his friends. And what was the consequence? A man charged with every state crime almost, for twenty years, was proved to have done — what? Paid some writers much more than they deserved, for having defended him against ten thousand and ten thousand libels, (some of which had been written by his inquisitors,) all which libels were confessed to have been lies by his inquisitors themselves; for they could not produce a shadow of one of the crimes with which they had charged him! I must own, Sir, I think that Sylla and my father ought to be set in opposition rather than paralleled.

My other objection is still more serious; and if I am so happy as to convince you, I shall hope that you will alter the paragraph; as it seems to impute something to Sir Robert, of which he was not only most innocent, but of which, if he had been guilty, I should think him extremely so, for he would have been very ungrateful. You say he had not the comfort to see that he had established his own family by anything which he received from the gratitude of that Hanover family, or from the gratitude of that country, which he had saved and served! Good Sir, what does this sentence seem to imply, but that either Sir Robert himself, or his family, thought or think, that the Kings George I. and II, or England, were ungrateful in not rewarding his services? Defend him and us from such a charge! He nor we ever had such a thought. Was it not rewarding him to make him prime minister, and maintain and support him against his enemies for twenty years together? Did not George I. make his eldest son a peer, and give to the father and son a valuable patent place in the custom-house for three lives? Did not George II. give my elder brother the auditor's place, and to my brother and me other rich places for our lives; for, though in the gift of the first lord of the treasury, do we not owe them to the King who made him so? Did not the late King make my father an earl, and dismiss him with a pension of 4000*l.* a-year for his life? Could he or we not think these ample rewards? What rapacious sordid wretches must he and we have been, and be, could we entertain such an idea? As far

have we all been from thinking him neglected by his country. Did not his country see and know these rewards? and could it think these rewards inadequate? Besides, Sir, great as I hold my father's services, they were solid and silent, not ostensible. They were of a kind to which I hold your justification a more suitable reward than pecuniary recompenses. To have fixed the house of Hanover on the throne, to have maintained this country in peace and affluence for twenty years, with the other services you record, Sir, were actions, the *éclat* of which must be illustrated by time and reflection; and whose splendour has been brought forwarder than I wish it had, by comparison with a period very dissimilar! If Sir Robert had not the comfort of leaving his family in affluence, it was not imputable to his King or his country. Perhaps I am proud that he did not. He died forty thousand pounds in debt. That was the wealth of a man that had been taxed as the plunderer of his country! Yet, with all my adoration of my father, I am just enough to own that it was his own fault if he died so poor. He had made Houghton much too magnificent for the moderate estate which he left to support it; and, as he never—I repeat it with truth, *never*—got any money but in the South Sea and while he was paymaster, his fondness for his paternal seat, and his boundless generosity, were too expensive for his fortune. I will mention one instance, which will show how little he was disposed to turn the favour of the crown to his own profit. He laid out fourteen thousand pounds of his own money on Richmond New Park. I could produce other reasons too why Sir Robert's family were not in so comfortable a situation, as the world, deluded by misrepresentation, might expect to see them at his death. My eldest brother had been a very bad economist during his father's life, and died himself fifty thousand pounds in debt, or more; so that to this day neither Sir Edward nor I have received the five thousand pounds a-piece which Sir Robert left us as our fortunes. I do not love to charge the dead; therefore will only say, that Lady Orford (reckoned a vast fortune, which till she died she never proved,) wasted vast sums; nor did my brother or father *ever* receive but the

twenty thousand pounds which she brought at first, and which were spent on the wedding and christening ; I mean, including her jewels.

I beg pardon, Sir, for this tedious detail, which is minutely, perhaps too minutely, true ; but, when I took the liberty of contesting any part of a work which I admire so much, I owed it to you and to myself to assign my reasons. I trust they will satisfy you ; and, if they do, I am sure you will alter a paragraph against which it is the duty of the family to exclaim. Dear as my father's memory is to my soul, I can never subscribe to the position that he was unrewarded by the house of Hanover.

TO GOVERNOR POWNALL.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 7, 1783.

You must allow me, Sir, to repeat my thanks for the second copy of your tract on my father, and for your great condescension in altering the two passages to which I presumed to object ; and which are not only more consonant to exactness, but, I hope, no disparagement to the piece. To me they are quite satisfactory. And it is a comfort to me too, that what I begged to have changed was not any reflection prejudicial to his memory ; but, in the first point, a parallel not entirely similar in circumstances ; and, in the other, a sort of censure on others to which I could not subscribe. With all my veneration for my father's memory, I should not remonstrate against just censure on him. Happily, to do justice to him, most iniquitous calumnies ought to be removed ; and then there would remain virtues and merits enough, far to outweigh human errors, from which the best of men, like him, cannot be exempt. Let his enemies, ay and his *friends*, be compared with him, and then justice would be done ! Your essay, Sir, will, I hope, some time or other, clear the way to his vindication. It points out the true way of examining his character ; and is itself, as far as it goes, unanswerable. As such, what an obligation it must be to, Sir, &c.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 10, 1783.

IF I consulted my reputation as a writer, which your lordship's partiality is so kind as to allot me, I should wait a few days till my granary is fuller of stock, which probably it would be by the end of next week ; but, in truth, I had rather be a grateful, and consequently a punctual correspondent, than an ingenious one ; as I value the honour of your lordship's friendship more than such tinsel bits of fame as can fall to my share, and of which I am particularly sick at present, as the Public Advertiser dressed me out t'other day with a heap of that dross, which he had pillaged from some other strolling playwrights, who I did not desire should be plundered for me.

Indeed, when the Parliament does meet, I doubt, nay hope, it will make less sensation than usual. The orators of Dublin have brought the flowers of Billingsgate to so high perfection, that ours comparatively will have no more scent than a dead dandelion. If your lordship has not seen the speeches of Mr. Flood and Mr. Grattan,¹ you may perhaps still think that our oyster-women can be more abusive than members of parliament.

Since I began my letter, I hear that the meeting of the delegates from the Volunteers is adjourned to the first of February.² This seems a very favourable circumstance. I don't like a reformation begun by a Popish army ! Indeed, I did

¹ In the course of a debate in the Irish House of Commons, on the 28th of October, upon Sir Henry Cavendish's motion for a retrenchment of the public expenditure, violent altercation had taken place between the rival orators. While Mr. Grattan animadverted, with disgraceful bitterness, on the "broken beak and disastrous countenance" of his opponent, and charged him with betraying every man who trusted in him, Mr. Flood broadly insinuated, that Mr. Grattan had betrayed his country for a sum of gold ; and, for prompt payment, had sold himself to the minister.—E.

² They assembled at Dublin on the 10th of November, when a plan of reform was produced and considered by them ; and on the following day Mr. Flood moved, in the House of Commons, for leave to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in Parliament. The motion was rejected by 157 votes to 77.—E.

hope that peace would bring us peace, at least not more than the discords incidental to a free government: but we seem not to have attained that era yet! I hope it will arrive, though I may not see it. I shall not easily believe that any radical alteration of a constitution that preserved us so long, and carried us to so great a height, will recover our affairs. There is a wide difference between correcting abuses and removing landmarks. Nobody disliked more than I the strides that were attempted towards increasing the prerogative; but as the excellence of our constitution, above all others, consists in the balance established between the three powers of King, Lords, and Commons, I wish to see that equilibrium preserved. No single man, nor any private junto, has a right to dictate laws to all three. In Ireland, truly, a still worse spirit I apprehend to be at bottom; in short, it is phrensy or folly to suppose that an army composed of three parts of Catholics can be intended for any good purposes.

These are my sentiments, my dear lord, and, you know, very disinterested. For myself, I have nothing to wish but ease and tranquillity for the rest of my time. I have no enmities to avenge. I do hope the present administration will last, as I believe there are *more* honest men in it than in any set that could replace them, though I have not a grain of partiality more than I had for their associates. Mr. Fox I think by far the ablest and soundest head in England, and am persuaded that the more he is tried the greater man he will appear.

Perhaps it is impertinent to trouble your lordship with my creed, it is certainly of no consequence to anybody; but I have nothing else that could entertain you, and at so serious a crisis can one think of trifles? In general I am not sorry that the nation is most disposed to trifle; the less it takes part, the more leisure will the ministers have to attend to the most urgent points. When so many individuals assume to be legislators, it is lucky that very few obey their institutes.

I rejoice to hear of Lady Strafford's good health, and am her and your lordship's most faithful humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1783.

YOUR lordship is so partial to me and my idle letters, that I am afraid of writing them; not lest they should sink below the standard you have pleased to affix to them in your own mind, but from fear of being intoxicated into attempting to keep them up to it, which would destroy their only merit, their being written naturally and without pretensions. Gratitude and good breeding compel me to make due answers; but I entreat your lordship to be assured, that, however vain I am of your favour, my only aim is to preserve the honour of your friendship; that it is all the praise I ask or wish; and that, with regard to letter-writing, I am firmly persuaded that it is a province in which women will always shine superiorly; for our sex is too jealous of the reputation of good sense, to condescend to hazard a thousand trifles and negligences, which give grace, ease, and familiarity to correspondence.¹ I will say no more on that subject, for I feel that I am on the brink of a dissertation; and though that fault would prove the truth of my proposition, I will not punish your lordship only to convince you that I am in the right.

¹ Some excellent advice on the subject of female letter-writing, will be found in a letter written, in 1809, by Lord Collingwood to one of his daughters:—"No sportsman," says the gallant Admiral, "ever hits a partridge without aiming at it; and skill is acquired by repeated attempts. When you write a letter, give it your greatest care, that it may be as perfect in all its parts as you can make it. Let the subject be sense, expressed in the most plain, intelligible, and elegant manner that you are capable of. If in a familiar epistle you should be playful and jocular, guard carefully that your wit be not sharp, so as to give pain to any person; and before you write a sentence, examine it, even the words of which it is composed, that there be nothing vulgar or inelegant in them. Remember, my dear, that your letter is the picture of your brains; and those whose brains are a compound of folly, nonsense, and impertinence, are to blame to exhibit them to the contempt of the world, or the pity of their friends. To write a letter with negligence, without proper stops, with crooked lines and great flourishing dashes, is inelegant; it argues either great ignorance of what is proper, or great indifference towards the person to whom it is addressed, and is consequently disrespectful." *Memoirs*, p. 430.—E.

The winter is not dull or disagreeable: on the contrary, it is pleasing, as the town is occupied on general subjects, and not, as is too common, on private scandal, private vices, and follies. The India-bill, air-balloons, Vestris, and the automaton, share all attention. Mrs. Siddons, as less a novelty, does not engross all conversation. If abuse still keeps above par, it confines itself to its prescriptive province, the ministerial line. In that walk it has tumbled a little into the kennel. The low buffoonery of Lord Thurlow, in laying the caricatura of the Coalition on the table of your lordship's House, has levelled it to Sadler's Wells; and Mr. Flood, the pillar of invective, does not promise to re-erect it; not, I conclude, from want of having imported a stock of ingredients, but his presumptuous debut on the very night of his entry was so wretched, and delivered in so barbarous a brogue, that I question whether he will ever recover the blow Mr. Courtenay gave him.¹ A young man may correct and improve, and rise from a first fall; but an elderly formed speaker has not an equal chance. Mr. Hamilton,² Lord Abercorn's heir, but by no means so laconic, had more success. Though his first essay, it was not at all dashed by bashfulness; and though he might have blushed for discovering so much personal rancour to Mr. Fox, he rather seemed to be impatient to discharge it.

Your lordship sees in the papers that the two Houses of Ireland have firmly resisted the innovations of the Volunteers. Indeed, it was time for the Protestant proprietors to make

¹ Mr. Flood took his seat for Winchester on the 8th of December, and on the same evening addressed the House in opposition to Mr. Fox's East India bill. "He spoke," says Wraxall, "with great ability and good sense, but the slow, measured, and sententious style of enunciation which characterized his eloquence, appeared to English ears cold and stiff: unfortunately, too, for Flood, one of his own countrymen, Courtenay, instantly opened on him such a battery of ridicule and wit as seemed to overwhelm the new member. He made no attempt at reply, and under these circumstances began the division. It formed a triumphant exhibition of ministerial strength, the Coalition numbering 208; while only 102 persons, of whom I was one, followed Pitt into the lobby: yet, within twelve days afterwards he found himself first minister, and so remained for above seventeen years."—E.

² John James Hamilton. In 1789, he succeeded his uncle as ninth Earl of Abercorn and second Viscount Hamilton; and, in 1790, was created Marquis of Abercorn.—E.

their stand; for though the Catholics behave decently, it would be into their hands that the prize would fall. The delegates, it is true, have sent over a most loyal address; but I wish their actions may not contradict their words! Mr. Flood's discomfiture here will, I suppose, carry him back to a field wherein his wicked spirit may have more effect. It is a very serious moment! I am in pain lest your county, my dear lord, (you know what I mean,) should countenance such pernicious designs.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Wednesday, May 5, 1784.

YOUR cherries, for aught I know, may, like Mr. Pitt, be half ripe before others are in blossom; but at Twickenham, I am sure, I could find dates and pomegranates on the quickset hedges, as soon as a cherry in swaddling-clothes on my walls. The very leaves on the horse-chesnuts are little snotty-nosed things, that cry and are afraid of the north-wind, and cling to the bough as if *old poker* was coming to take them away. For my part, I have seen nothing like spring but a chimney-sweeper's garland; and yet I have been three days in the country — and the consequence was, that I was glad to come back to town.

I do not wonder that you feel differently; anything is warmth and verdure when compared to poring over memorials. In truth, I think you will be much happier for being out of Parliament. You could do no good there; you have no views of ambition to satisfy: and when neither duty nor ambition calls, (I do not condescend to name avarice, which never is to be satisfied, nor deserves to be reasoned with, nor has any place in your breast,) I cannot conceive what satisfaction an elderly man can have in listening to the passions or follies of others: nor is eloquence such a banquet, when one knows that, whoever the cooks are, whatever the sauces, one has eaten as good beef or mutton before, and, perhaps, as well dressed. It is surely time to live for one's self, when one has not a vast while to live; and you, I am

persuaded, will live the longer for leading a country life. How much better to be planting, nay, making experiments on smoke (if not too dear), than reading applications from officers, a quarter of whom you could not serve, nor content three quarters! You had not time for necessary exercise; and, I believe, would have blinded yourself. In short, if you will live in the air all day, be totally idle, and not read or write a line by candle-light, and retrench your suppers, I shall rejoice in your having nothing to do but that dreadful punishment, pleasing yourself. Nobody has any claims on you; you have satisfied every point of honour; you have no cause for being particularly grateful to the Opposition; and you want no excuse for living for yourself. Your resolutions on economy are not only prudent, but just; and, to say the truth, I believe that if you had continued at the head of the army, you would have ruined yourself. You have too much generosity to have curbed yourself, and would have had too little time to attend to doing so. I know by myself how pleasant it is to have laid up a little for those I love, for those that depend on me, and for old servants. Moderate wishes may be satisfied; and, which is still better, are less liable to disappointment.

I am not preaching, nor giving advice, but congratulating you: and it is certainly not being selfish, when I rejoice at your being thrown by circumstances into a retired life, though it will occasion my seeing less of you: but I have always preferred what was most for your own honour and happiness; and as you taste satisfaction already, it will not diminish, for they are the first moments of passing from a busy life to a quiet one that are the most irksome. You have the felicity of being able to amuse yourself with what the grave world calls trifles; but as gravity does not happen to be wisdom, trifles are full as important as what is respected as serious; and more amiable, as generally more innocent. Most men are bad or ridiculous, sometimes both: at least my experience tells me what my reading had told me before, that they are so in a great capital of a sinking country. If immortal fame is his object, a Cato may die —

but he will do no good. If only the preservation of his virtue had been his point, he might have lived comfortably at Athens, like Atticus — who, by the way, happens to be as immortal; though I will give him credit for having had no such view. Indeed, I look on this country as so irrecoverably on the verge of ruin, from its enormous debt, from the loss of America, from the almost as certain prospect of losing India, that my pride would dislike to be an actor when the crash may happen.

You seem to think that I might send you more news. So I might, if I would talk of elections;¹ but those, you know, I hate, as, in general, I do all details. How Mr. Fox has recovered such a majority I do not guess; still less do I comprehend how there could be so many that had not voted, after the poll had lasted so long.² Indeed, I should be sorry to understand such mysteries.—Of new peers, or new elevations, I hear every day, but am quite ignorant which are to be true. Rumour always creates as many as the King, when he makes several. In fact, I do know nothing. Adieu!

P. S. The summer is come to town, but I hope is gone into the country too.

¹ The Parliament had been dissolved in March, and a new one was summoned to meet on the 18th of May.—E.

² Mr. Pitt says, in a letter to Mr. Wilberforce, of the 8th of April, “Westminster goes on well, in spite of the Duchess of Devonshire and the other women of the people; but when the poll will close is uncertain.” At the close of it, on the 17th of May, the numbers were, for Hood 6694, Fox 6233, Wray 5998. Walpole, whose delicate health at this time confined him almost entirely to his house, went in a sedan-chair to give his vote for Mr. Fox. “Apropos of elections,” writes Hannah More to her sister, “I had like to have got into a fine scrape the other night. I was going to pass the evening at Mrs. Cole’s, in Lincoln’s-inn Fields. I went in a chair: they carried me through Covent-Garden: a number of people, as I went along, desired the men not to go through the Garden, as there were a hundred armed men, who, suspecting every chairman belonged to Brookes’s, would fall upon us. In spite of my entreaties, the men would have persisted; but a stranger, out of humanity, made them set me down; and the shrieks of the wounded—for there was a terrible battle — intimidated the chairmen, who at last were prevailed upon to carry me another way. A vast number of people followed me, crying out, ‘It is Mrs. Fox: none but Mr. Fox’s wife would dare to come into Covent-Garden in a chair; she is going to canvass in the dark!’ Though not a little frightened, I laughed heartily at this; but shall stir no more in a chair for some time.” *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 315.—E.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.¹

May, 6, 1784.

MR. WALPOLE thanks Miss More a thousand times, not only for so obligingly complying with his request, but for letting him have the satisfaction of possessing and reading again and again her charming and very genteel poem, the "Bas Bleu." He ought not, in modesty, to commend so much a piece, in which he himself is flattered; but truth is more durable than blushing, and he must be just, though he may be vain. The ingenuity with which she has introduced, so easily, very difficult rhymes, is admirable; and though there is a quantity of learning, it has all the air of negligence, instead of that of pedantry. As she commands him, he will not disobey; and, so far from giving a single copy, he gives her his word that it shall not go out of his hands. He begs his particular compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and is Miss More's most devoted and much obliged humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, May 21, 1784.

I AM perfectly satisfied with your epitaph,² and would not have a syllable altered. It tells exactly what it means to say, and, that truth being an encomium, wants no addition or amplification. Nor do I love late language for modern facts, nor will European tongues perish since printing has been discovered. I should approve French least of all; it

¹ Walpole's intimacy with Miss Hannah More commenced in the year 1781. The following passages occur in her letters of that and the following year:—"Mr. Walpole has done me the honour of inviting me to Strawberry Hill: as he is said to be a shy man, I must consider this as a great compliment."—"We dined the other day at Strawberry Hill, and passed as delightful a day as elegant literature, high breeding, and lively wit can afford. As I was the greatest stranger, Mr. Walpole devoted himself to my amusement with great politeness."—E.

² An epitaph for the monument erected by the states of Jersey to the memory of Major Pearson, killed in the attack of that island by the French, in January 1781.

would be a kind of insult to the vanquished: and, besides, the example of a hero should be held out to his countrymen rather than to their enemies. You must take care to have the word *caused*, in the last line but one, spelt rightly, and not *caus'd*.

I know nothing of the Parliament but what you saw in the papers. I came hither yesterday, and am transported, like you, with the beauty of the country; ay, and with its perfumed air too. The *lilac-tide* scents even the insides of the rooms.

I desired Lady Ailesbury to carry you Lord Melcombe's Diary.¹ It is curious indeed; not so much from the secrets it blabs, which are rather characteristic than novel, but from the wonderful folly of the author, who was so fond of talking of himself, that he tells all he knew of himself, though scarce an event that does not betray his profligacy; and (which is still more surprising that he should disclose) almost every one exposes the contempt in which he was held, and his consequential disappointments and disgraces! Was ever any man the better for another's experience? What a lesson is here against versatility! I, who have lived through all the scenes unfolded, am entertained; but I should think that to younger readers half the book must be unintelligible. He explains nothing but the circumstances of his own situation; and, though he touches on many important periods, he leaves them undeveloped, and often undetermined. It is diverting to hear him rail at Lord Halifax and others, for the very kind of double-dealing which he relates coolly of himself in the next page. Had he gone backwards, he might have given half a dozen volumes of his own life, with similar anecdotes and variations. I am most surprised, that when self-love is the whole ground-work of the performance, there should be little or no attempt at shining as an author, though he was one. As he had so much wit too, I am amazed that not a feature of it appears. The discussion in the appendix, on the late

¹ "The Diary of George Bubb Dodington, Baron of Melcombe Regis, from March 8, 1749, to February 6, 1761; published by Henry Penrudocke Wyndham." See vol. ii. p. 119.—E.

Prince's question for increase of allowance, is the only part in which there is sense or honesty. There is, in the imperfect account of Rochfort, a strong circumstance or two that pleased me much. There are many passages that will displease several others throughout.

Mr. Coxe's Travels¹ are very different: plain, clear, sensible, instructive, and entertaining. It is a noble work, and precious to me who delight in quartos: the two volumes contain twelve hundred pages; I have already devoured a quarter, though I have had them but three days. [The rest of this letter is lost.]

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESURY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, June 8, 1784.

You frightened me for a minute, my dear Madam; but every letter since has given me pleasure, by telling me how rapidly you recovered, and how perfectly well you are again. Pray, however, do not give me any more such joys. I shall be quite content with your remaining immortal, without the foil of any alarm. You gave all your friends a panic, and may trust their attachment without renewing it. I received as many inquiries the next day as if an archbishop was in danger, and all the bench hoped he was going to heaven.

Mr. Conway wonders I do not talk of Voltaire's Memoirs. Lord bless me! I saw it two months ago; the Lucans brought it from Paris and lent it to me: nay, and I have seen most of it before; and I believe this an imperfect copy, for it ends no how at all. Besides, it was quite out of my head. Lord Melcombe's Diary put that and everything else out of my mind. I wonder much more at Mr. Conway's not talking of this! It gossips about the living as familiarly as a modern newspaper. I long to hear what * * * * says about it. I wish the newspapers were as accurate! They have been cir-

¹ "Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark; interspersed with Historical Relations and Political Inquiries; by William Cox, M. A.," in two volumes quarto.—E.

cumstantial about *Lady Walsingham's* birth-day clothes, which to be sure one is glad to know, only unluckily there is no such person. However, I dare to say that her dress was very becoming, and that she looked charmingly.

The month of June, according to custom immemorial, is as cold as Christmas. I had a fire last night, and all my rose-buds, I believe, would have been very glad to sit by it. I have other grievances to boot; but as they are annuals too, —*videlicet*, people to see my house,—I will not torment your ladyship with them: yet I know nothing else. None of my neighbours are come into the country yet: one would think all the dowagers were elected into the new Parliament. Adieu, my dear Madam!

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1784.

I CAN answer you very readily in your own tone, that is, about weather and country grievances, and without one word of news or politics; for I know neither, nor inquire of them.¹ I am very well content to be at Strulbrug, and to *exist* after I have done *being*: and I am still better pleased that you are in the same way of thinking; or of not thinking; for I am sure both your health and your mind will find the benefits of living for yourself and family only. It were not fit that the young should concentrate themselves in so narrow a circle; nor do the young seem to have any such intention. Let them mend or mar the world as they please; the world takes its own way upon the whole: and, though there may be an uncommon swarm of animalculæ for a season, things return into their own channel from their own bias, before any effectual nostrum of fumigation is discovered. In the mean time, I am for giving

¹ “As politics spoil all conversation, Mr. Walpole, the other night, proposed that everybody should forfeit half-a-crown who said anything tending to introduce the idea either of ministers or opposition. I added, that whoever even mentioned *pit-coal* or a *fox-skin* muff, should be considered as guilty; and it was accordingly voted.” Hannah More, March 8, 1784.—E.

all due weight to local grievances, though with no natural turn towards attending to them: but they serve for conversation. We have no newly-invented grubs to eat our fruit; indeed, I have no fruit to be eaten: but I should not lament if the worms would eat my gardener, who, you know, is so bad an one that I never have anything in my garden. I am now waiting for dry weather to cut my hay; though nature certainly never intended hay should be cut dry, as it always rains all June. But here is a worse calamity; one is never safe by day or night: Mrs. Walsingham, who has bought your brother's late house at Ditton, was robbed a few days ago in the high road, within a mile of home, at *seven* in the evening. The *dii minorum gentium* pilfer everything. Last night they stole a couple of yards of lead off the pediment of the door of my cottage. A gentleman at Putney, who has three men-servants, had his house broken open last week, and lost some fine miniatures, which he valued so much that he would not hang them up. You may imagine what a pain this gives me in my baubles! I have been making the round of my fortifications this morning, and ordering new works.

I am concerned for the account you give me of your brother. Life does not appear to be such a jewel as to preserve it carefully for its own sake. I think the same of its *good things*: if they do not procure amusement or comfort, I doubt they only produce the contrary. Yet it is silly to repine; for, probably, whatever any man does by choice, he knows will please him best, or at least will prevent greater uneasiness. I, therefore, rather retract my concern; for, with a vast fortune, Lord Hertford might certainly do what he would: and if, at his age, he can wish for more than that fortune will obtain, I may pity his taste or temper; but I shall think that you and I are much happier who can find enjoyments in an humbler sphere, nor envy those who have no time for trifling. I, who have never done anything else, am not at all weary of my occupation. Even three days of continued rain have not put me out of humour or spirits. *C'est beaucoup dire* for an *Anglais*. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1784.

INSTEAD of coming to you, I am thinking of packing up and going to town for winter, so desperate is the weather! I found a great fire at Mrs. Clive's this evening, and Mr. Rafter hanging over it like a smoked ham. They tell me my hay will be all spoiled for want of cutting; but I had rather it should be destroyed by standing than by being mowed, as the former will cost me nothing but the crop, and 'tis very dear to make nothing but a water-souchy of it.

You know I have lost a niece, and found another nephew: he makes the fifty-fourth, reckoning both sexes. We are certainly an affectionate family, for of late we do nothing but marry one another. Have not you felt a little twinge in a remote corner of your heart on Lady Harrington's death?¹ She dreaded death so extremely that I am glad she had not a moment to be sensible of it. I have a great affection for sudden deaths; they save oneself and everybody else a deal of ceremony.

The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough breakfasted here on Monday, and seemed much pleased, though it rained the whole time with an Egyptian darkness. I should have thought there had been deluges enough to destroy all Egypt's other plagues: but the newspapers talk of locusts; I suppose relations of your beetles, though probably not so fond of green fruit; for the scene of their campaign is Queen-square, Westminster, where there certainly has not been an orchard since the reign of Canute.

I have, at last, seen an air-balloon; just as I once did see a tiny review, by passing one accidentally on Hounslow-heath. I was going last night to Lady Onslow at Richmond, and over Mr. Cambridge's field I saw a bundle in the air not bigger than the moon,² and she herself could not have descended with

¹ See vol. i. p. 356.—E.

² "Lunardi's nest," says Hannah More, "when I saw it yesterday, looking like a peg-top, seemed, I assure you, higher than the moon, 'riding towards her highest noon.'"—E.

more composure if she had expected to find Endymion fast asleep. It seemed to 'light on Richmond-hill; but Mrs. Hobart was going by, and her *coiffure* prevented my seeing it alight. The papers say, that a balloon has been made at Paris representing the castle of Stockholm, in compliment to the King of Sweden; but that they are afraid to let it off: so, I suppose, it will be served up to him in a dessert. No great progress, surely, is made in these airy navigations, if they are still afraid of risking the necks of two or three subjects for the entertainment of a visiting sovereign. There is seldom a *feu de joie* for the birth of a Dauphin that does not cost more lives. I thought royalty and science never haggled about the value of blood when experiments are in the question.

I shall wait for summer before I make you a visit. Though I dare to say that you have converted your smoke-kilns into a manufacture of balloons, pray do not erect a Strawberry castle in the air for my reception, if it will cost a pismire a hair of its head. Good night! I have ordered my bed to be heated as hot as an oven, and Tonton and I must go into it.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 6, 1784.

I AM very sorry, my dear lord, that I must answer your lordship's letter by a condolence. I had not the honour of being acquainted with Mrs. Vyse, but have heard so much good of her, that it is impossible not to lament her.

Since this month began we have had fine weather; and 'twere great pity if we had not, when the earth is covered with such abundant harvests! They talk of an earthquake having been felt in London. Had Sir William Hamilton been there, he would think the town gave itself great airs. He, I believe, is *putting up* volcanos in his own country. In my youth, philosophers were eager to ascribe every uncommon discovery to the Deluge; now it is the fashion to solve every appearance by conflagrations. If there was such an inundation upon the earth, and such a furnace under it, I am amazed

that Noah and company were not boiled to death. Indeed, I am a great sceptic about human reasonings; they predominate only for a time, like other mortal fashions, and are so often exploded after the mode is passed, that I hold them little more serious, though they call themselves wisdom. How many have I lived to see established and confuted! For instance, the necessity of a southern continent as a balance was supposed to be unanswerable; and so it was, till Captain Cook found there was no such thing. We are poor silly animals: we live for an instant upon a particle of a boundless universe, and are much like a butterfly that should argue about the nature of the seasons and what creates their vicissitudes, and does not exist itself to see one annual revolution of them!

Adieu! my dear lord! If my reveries are foolish, remember, I give them for no better. If I depreciate human wisdom, I am sure I do not assume a grain to myself; nor have anything to value myself upon more than being your lordship's most obliged humble servant.

TO MR. DODSLEY.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 8, 1784.

I MUST beg, Sir, that you will tell Mr. Pinkerton, that I am much obliged to him for the honour he is willing to do me, though I must desire his leave to decline it. His book² deserves an eminent patron: I am too inconsiderable to give any relief to it, and even in its own line am unworthy to be distinguished. One of my first pursuits was a collection of medals; but I early gave it over, as I could not afford many branches of *virtù*, and have since changed or given away several of my best Greek and Roman medals. What remain, I shall be glad to show Mr. Pinkerton; and, if it would

¹ Now first collected.

² The first edition of Pinkerton's "Essay on Medals" was published by Dodsley, in two volumes octavo, in this year, without the name of the author.—E.

not be inconvenient to him to come hither any morning by eleven o'clock, after next Thursday, that he will appoint, he shall not only see my medals, but any other baubles here that can amuse him. I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 14, 1784.

As Lady Cecilia Johnston offers to be postman, I cannot resist writing a line, though I have not a word to say. In good sooth, I know nothing, hear of nothing but robberies and housebreaking; consequently never think of ministers, India directors, and such honest men. Mrs. Clive has been broken open, and Mr. Raftor miscarried and died of the fright. Lady Browne has lost all her liveries and her temper, and Lady Blandford has cried her eyes out on losing a lurch and almost her wig. In short, as I do not love exaggeration, I do not believe there have been above threescore highway robberies within this week, fifty-seven houses that have been broken open, and two hundred and thirty that are to be stripped on the first opportunity. We are in great hopes, however, that the King of Spain, now he has demolished Algiers, the metropolitan see of thieves, will come and bombard Richmond, Twickenham, Hampton-court, and all the suffragan cities that swarm with pirates and banditti, as he has a better knack at destroying vagabonds than at recovering his own.

Ireland is in a blessed way; and, as if the climate infected everybody that sets foot there, the viceroy's aides-de-camp have blundered into a riot, that will set all the humours afloat. I wish you joy of the summer being come now it is gone, which is better than not coming at all. I hope Lady Cecilia will return with an account of your all being perfectly well. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 24, 1784.

I AM much obliged to you, Sir, for the pieces you have sent me of your own composition.² There is great poetic beauty and merit in them, with great knowledge of the ancient masters and of the best of the modern. You have talents that will succeed in whatever you pursue, and industry to neglect nothing that will improve them. Despise petty critics, and confute them by making your works as perfect as you can.

I am sorry you sent me the old manuscript; because, as I told you, I have so little time left to enjoy anything, that I should think myself a miser if I coveted for a moment what I must leave so soon. I shall be very glad, Sir, to see you here again, whenever it is convenient to you.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 7, 1784.

THE summer is come at last, my lord, drest as fine as a birth-day, though not with so many flowers on its head. In truth, the sun is an old fool, who apes the modern people of

¹ This is the first of the series of letters addressed by Mr. Walpole to Mr. Pinkerton. They are taken from his "Literary Correspondence," first printed in 1830, in two volumes octavo, by Dawson Turner, Esq. M.A. F.R.S. from the originals in his valuable collection. Mr. Pinkerton was born at Edinburgh in February 1758, and died at Paris in May 1826. "He was," says Mr. Dawson Turner, "a man of a capacious mind, great acuteness, strong memory, restless activity, and extraordinary perseverance: the anecdotes contained in this correspondence afford a striking proof of the power of talents and industry to raise their possessor in the scale of society, as well as in the opinion of the world: unfortunately, they are also calculated to read us another and not less instructive lesson, that somewhat more is required to turn such advantages to their full account; and that the endowments of the mind, unless accompanied by sound and consistent principles, can tend but little to the happiness of the individual, or to the good of society."—E.

² In 1781, Mr. Pinkerton had published an octavo volume entitled "Rimes;" a second edition of which, with additions, appeared in the following year.—E.

fashion by arriving too late: the day is going to bed before he makes his appearance; and one has scarce time to admire his embroidery of green and gold. It was cruel to behold such expanse of corn everywhere, and yet see it all turned to a water-soucy. If I could admire Dante,—which, asking Mr. Hayley's pardon, I do not,—I would have written an olio of Jews and Pagans, and sent Ceres to reproach Master Noah with breaking his promise of the world never being drowned again. But this last week has restored matters to their old channel; and I trust we shall have bread to eat next winter, or I think we must have lived on apples, of which to be sure there is enough to prevent a famine. This is all I know, my lord; and I hope no news to your lordship. I have exhausted the themes of air-balloons and highwaymen; and if you *will* have my letters, you must be content with my common-place chat on the seasons. I do nothing worth repeating, nor hear that others do: and though I am content to rust myself, I should be glad to tell your lordship anything that would amuse you. I dined two days ago at Mrs. Garrick's with Sir William Hamilton, who is returning to the kingdom of cinders. Mrs. Walsingham¹ was there with her son and daughter. He is a very pleasing young man; a fine figure; his face like hers, with something of his grandfather Sir Charles Williams, without his vanity; very sensible, and uncommonly well-bred. The daughter is an imitatress of Mrs. Damer, and has modelled a bust of her brother. Mrs. Damer herself is modelling two masks for the key-stones of the new bridge at Henley. Sir William, who has seen them, says they are in her true antique style. I am in possession of her sleeping dogs in terra cotta. She asked me if I would consent to her executing them in marble for the Duke of Richmond? I said, gladly; I should like they should exist in a more durable material; but I would not part with the original, which is sharper and more alive. Mr. Wyat the architect saw them here lately; and said, he was sure that if the idea was given to the best statuary in Europe, he would not produce so perfect a group.

¹ Charlotte, daughter of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Bart. married to the Hon. Robert Boyle Walsingham.—E.

Indeed, with these dogs and the riches I possess by Lady Di,¹ poor Strawberry may vie with much prouder collections.

Adieu, my good lord ! when I fold up a letter I am ashamed of it ; but it is your own fault. The last thing I should think of would be troubling your lordship with such insipid stuff, if you did not command it. Lady Strafford will bear me testimony how often I have protested against it.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.²

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1784.

I HAVE read your piece, Sir, very attentively ; and, as I promised, will give you my opinion of it fairly. There is much wit in it, especially in the part of Nebuchadnezer ; and the dialogue is very easy, and the *dénouement* in favour of Barbara interesting. There are, however, I think, some objections to be made, which, having written so well, you may easily remove, as they are rather faults in the mechanism than in the writing. Several scenes seem to me to finish too abruptly, and not to be enough connected. Juliana is not enough distinguished, as of an age capable of more elevated sentiments : her desire of playing at hotcockles and blind-man's-buff sounds more childish than vulgar. There is another defect, which is in the conduct of the plot : surely there is much too long an interval between the discovery of the marriage of Juliana and Philip, and the anger of her parents. The audience must expect immediate effect from it ; and yet the noise it is to make arrives so late, that it would have been forgotten in the course of the intermediate scenes.

I doubt a little, whether it would not be dangerous to open the piece with a song that must be totally incomprehensible to at least almost all the audience. It is safer to engage their prejudices by something captivating. I have the same objection to Juliana's mistaking *deposit* for *posset*, which may give

¹ The number of original drawings by Lady Diana Beauclerc, at Strawberry Hill.

² Now first collected.

an ill turn: besides, those mistakes have been too often produced on the stage: so has the character of Mrs. Winter, a romantic old maid; nor does she contribute to the plot or catastrophe. I am afraid that even Mrs. Vernon's aversion to the country is far from novel; and Mr. Colman, more accustomed to the stage than I am, would certainly think so. Nebuchadnezer's repartees of "Very well, thank you!" and bringing in Philip, when bidden to *go for a rascal*, are printed in the *Terræ Filius*, and, I believe, in other jest-books; and therefore had better be omitted.

I flatter myself, Sir, you will excuse these remarks; as they are intended kindly, both for your reputation and interest, and to prevent their being made by the manager, or audience, or your friends the reviewers. I am ready to propose your piece to Mr. Colman at any time; but, as I have sincerely an opinion of your parts and talents, it is the part of a friend to wish you to be very correct, especially in a first piece; for, such is the ill-nature of mankind, and their want of judgment too, that, if a new author does not succeed in a first attempt on the stage, a prejudice is contracted against him, and may be fatal to others of his productions, which might have prospered, had that bias not been taken. An established writer for the stage may venture almost any idleness; but a first essay is very different.

Shall I send you your piece, Sir; and how? As Mr. Colman's theatre will not open till next summer, you will have full time to make any alterations you please. I mean, if you should think any of my observations well founded, and which perhaps are very trifling. I have little opinion of my own sagacity as a critic, nor love to make objections; nor should have taken so much liberty with you, if you had not pressed it. I am sure in me it is a mark of regard, and which I never pay to an indifferent author: my admiration of your essay on medals was natural, uninvited, and certainly unaffected. My acquaintance with you since, Sir, has confirmed my opinion of your good sense, and interested me in behalf of your works; and, having lived so long in the world myself, if my experience can be of any service to you, I cannot withhold it when you

ask it; at the same time leaving you perfectly at liberty to reject it, if not adopted by your own judgment. The experience of old age is very likely to be balanced by the weaknesses incident to that age. I have not, however, its positiveness yet; and willingly abandon my criticism to the vigour of your judgment.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1784.

You have accepted my remarks with great good-humour, Sir: I wish you may not have paid too much regard to them; and I should be glad that you did not rest any alterations on my single judgment, to which I have but little respect myself. I have not thought often on theatric performances, and of late not at all. A chief ground of my observations on your piece proceeded from having taken notice that an English audience is apt to be struck with some familiar sound, though there is nothing ridiculous in the passage; and fall into a foolish laugh, that often proves fatal to the author. Such was my objection to *hot-cockles*. You have, indeed, convinced me that I did not enough attend to your piece, as a *farce*; and, you must excuse me, my regard for you and your wit made me consider it rather as a short comedy. Very probably too, I have retained the pedantic impressions of the French, and demanded more observance of their rules than is necessary or just: yet I myself have often condemned their too delicate rigour. Nay, I have wished that farce and speaking harlequins were more encouraged, in order to leave open a wider field of invention to writers for the stage. Of late I have amply had my wish: Mr. O'Keefe has brought our audiences to bear with every extravagance; and, were there not such irresistible humour in his utmost daring, it would be impossible to deny that he has passed even beyond the limits of nonsense. But I confine this approbation to his *Agreeable Surprise*. In his other pieces

¹ Now first collected.

there is much more untempered nonsense than humour. Even that favourite performance I wondered that Mr. Colman dared to produce.

Your remark, that a piece full of marked characters would be void of nature, is most just. This is so strongly my opinion, that I thought it a great fault in Miss Burney's *Cecilia*, though it has a thousand other beauties, that she has laboured far too much to make all her personages talk always in character; whereas, in the present refined or depraved state of human nature, most people endeavour to conceal their real character, not to display it. A professional man, as a pedantic fellow of a college or a seaman, has a characteristic dialect; but that is very different from continually *letting out* his ruling passion.

This brings me, Sir, to the alteration you offer in the personage of Mrs. Winter, whom you wittily propose to turn into a mermaid. I approve the idea much: I like too the restoration of Mrs. Vernon to a plain reasonable woman. She will be a contrast to the bad characters, and but a gradation to produce Barbara, without making her too glaringly bright without any intermediate shade. In truth, as you certainly may write excellently if you please, I wish you to bestow your utmost abilities on whatever you give to the public. I am wrong when I would have a farce as chaste and sober as a comedy; but I would have a farce made as good as it can be. I do not know *how* that is to be accomplished; but I believe you do. You are so obliging as to offer to accept a song of mine, if I have one by me. Dear Sir, I have no more talent for writing a song than for writing an ode like Dryden's or Gray's. It is a talent *per se*; and given, like every other branch of genius, by nature alone. Poor Shenstone was labouring through his whole life to write a perfect song, and, in my opinion at least, never once succeeded; not better than Pope did in a St. Cecilian ode. I doubt whether we have not gone a long, long way beyond the possibility of writing a good song. All the words in the language have been so often employed on simple images (without which a song cannot be good), and such reams of

bad verses have been produced in that kind, that I question whether true simplicity itself could please now. At least we are not likely to have any such thing. Our present choir of poetic virgins write in the other extreme. They colour their compositions so highly with choice and dainty phrases, that their own dresses are not more fantastic and romantic. Their nightingales make as many divisions as Italian singers. But this is wandering from the subject; and, while I only meant to tell you what I could not do myself, I am telling you what others do ill. I will yet hazard one other opinion, though relative to composition in general. There are two periods favourable to poets: a rude age, when a genius may hazard anything, and when nothing has been forestalled: the other is, when, after ages of barbarism and incorrection, a master or two produces models formed by purity and taste: Virgil, Horace, Boileau, Corneille, Racine, Pope, exploded the licentiousness that reigned before them. What happened? Nobody dared to write in contradiction to the severity established; and very few had abilities to rival their masters. Insipidity ensues, novelty is dangerous, and bombast usurps the throne which had been debased by a race of *fainéants*. This rhapsody will probably convince you, Sir, how much you was mistaken in setting any value on my judgment.

February will certainly be time enough for your piece to be finished. I again beg you, Sir, to pay no deference to my criticisms, against your own cool reflections. It is prudent to consult others before one ventures on publication; but every single person is as liable to be erroneous as an author. An elderly man, as he gains experience, acquires prejudices too: nay, old age has generally two faults; it is too quick-sighted into the faults of the time being, and too blind to the faults that reigned in his own youth, which, having partaken of or having admired, though injudiciously, he recollects with complacence.

I confess, too, that there must be two distinct views in writers for the stage, one of which is more allowable to them than to other authors. The one is durable fame; the other, peculiar to dramatic authors, the view of writing to

the present taste (and, perhaps, as you say, to the level of the audience). I do not mean for the sake of profit; but even high comedy must risk a little of its immortality by consulting the ruling taste; and thence comedy always loses some of its beauties, the transient, and some of its intelligibility. Like its harsher sister, satire, many of its allusions must vanish, as the objects it aims at correcting cease to be in vogue; and, perhaps, that cessation, the natural death of fashion, is often ascribed by an author to his own reproofs. Ladies would have left off patching on the Whig or Tory side of their face, though Mr. Addison had not written his excellent *Spectator*.¹ Probably even they who might be corrected by his reprimand, adopted some new distinction as ridiculous; not discovering that his satire was levelled at their partial animosity, and not at the mode of placing their patches; for, unfortunately, as the world cannot be cured of being foolish, a preacher who eradicates one folly, does but make room for some other.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 15, 1784.

As I have heard nothing from you, I flatter myself Lady Ailesbury mends, or I think you would have brought her again to the physicians: you will, I conclude, next week, as towards the end of it the ten days they named will be expired. I must be in town myself about Thursday, on some little business of my own.

As I was writing this, my servants called me away to see a balloon; I suppose Blanchard's, that was to be let off from Chelsea this morning. I saw it from the common field before the window of my round tower. It appeared about a third of the size of the moon, or less, when setting, something above the tops of the trees on the level horizon. It was then

¹ The singularly clever and witty paper here alluded to was written by Addison himself: it is No. 81, "Female Party-spirit Discovered by Patches," and was published June 2, 1711.—D. T.

descending; and, after rising and declining a little, it sunk slowly behind the trees, I should think about or beyond Sunbury, at five minutes after one. But you know I am a very inexact guesser at measures and distances, and may be mistaken in many miles; and you know how little I have attended to those *airgonauts*: only t'other night I diverted myself with a sort of meditation on future *airgonation*, supposing that it will not only be perfected, but will depose navigation. I did not finish it, because I am not skilled, like the gentleman that used to write political ship-news, in that style, which I wanted to perfect my essay: but in the prelude I observed how ignorant the ancients were in supposing Icarus melted the wax of his wings by too near access to the sun, whereas he would have been frozen to death before he made the first post on that road. Next, I discovered an alliance between Bishop Wilkins's art of flying and his plan of an universal language; the latter of which he no doubt calculated to prevent the want of an interpreter when he should arrive at the moon.

But I chiefly amused myself with ideas of the change that would be made in the world by the substitution of balloons to ships. I supposed our seaports to become *deserted villages*; and Salisbury-plain, Newmarket-heath, (another canvass for alteration of ideas,) and all downs (but *the Downs*) arising into dock-yards for aërial vessels. Such a field would be ample in furnishing new speculations. But to come to my ship-news:—

“The good balloon Dædalus, Captain Wing-ate, will fly in a few days for China; he will stop at the top of the Monument to take in passengers.

“Arrived on Brand-sands, the Vulture, Captain Nabob; the Tortoise snow, from Lapland; the Pet-en-l'air, from Versailles; the Dreadnought, from Mount Etna, Sir W. Hamilton, commander; the Tympany, Montgolfier; and the Mine-A-in-a-bandbox, from the Cape of Good Hope. Foundered in a hurricane, the Bird of Paradise, from Mount Ararat. The Bubble, Sheldon, took fire, and was burnt to her gallery; and the Phoenix is to be cut down to a second-rate.”

In those days Old Sarum will again be a town and have houses in it. There will be fights in the air with wind-guns and bows and arrows; and there will be prodigious increase of land for tillage, especially in France, by breaking up all public roads as useless. But enough of my fooleries; for which I am sorry you must pay double postage.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

October 27, 1784.

I WOULD not answer your letter, Sir, till I could tell you that I had put your play into Mr. Colman's hands, which I have done. He desired my consent to his carrying it into the country to read it deliberately: you shall know as soon as I receive his determination. I am much obliged to you for the many civil and kind expressions in your letter, and for the friendly information you give me. Partiality, I fear, dictated the former; but the last I can only ascribe to the goodness of your heart. I have published nothing of any size but the pieces you mention, and one or two small tracts now out of print and forgotten. The rest have been prefaces to my Strawberry editions, and to a few other publications; and some fugitive pieces which I reprinted several years ago in a small volume, and which shall be at your service, with the Catalogue of Noble Authors.

With regard to the bookseller who has taken the trouble to collect my writings, (amongst which I do not doubt but he will generously bestow on me many that I did not *write*, according to the liberal practice of such compilers,) and who also intends to write my life, to which (as I never did anything worthy of the notice of the public) he must likewise be a volunteer contributor, it would be vain for me to endeavour to prevent such a design. Whoever has been so unadvised as to throw himself on the public, must pay such a tax in a pamphlet or magazine when he dies; but, happily, the insects

¹ Now first collected.

that prey on carrion are still more short-lived than the carcasses were, from which they draw their nutriment. Those momentary abortions live but a day, and are thrust aside by like embryos. Literary characters, when not illustrious, are known only to a few literary men; and, amidst the world of books, few readers can come to my share. Printing, that secures existence (in libraries) to indifferent authors of any bulk, is like those cases of Egyptian mummies which in catacombs preserve bodies of one knows not whom, and which are scribbled over with characters that nobody attempts to read, till nobody understands the language in which they were written.

I believe therefore it will be most wise to swim for a moment on the passing current, secure that it will soon hurry me into the ocean where all things are forgotten. To appoint a biographer is to bespeak a panegyric; and I doubt whether they who collect their works for the public, and, like me, are conscious of no intrinsic worth, do but beg mankind to accept of talents (whatever they were) in lieu of virtues. To anticipate spurious publications by a comprehensive and authentic one, is almost as great an evil: it is giving a body to scattered atoms; and such an act in one's old age is declaring a fondness for the indiscretions of youth, or for the trifles of an age which, though more mature, is only the less excusable. It is most true, Sir, that, so far from being prejudiced in favour of my own writings, I am persuaded that, had I thought early as I think now, I should never have appeared as an author. Age, frequent illness and pain, have given me as many hours of reflection in the intervals of the two latter, as the two latter have disabled from reflection; and, besides their showing me the inutility of all our little views, they have suggested an observation that I love to encourage in myself from the rationality of it. I have learnt and have practised the humiliating task of comparing myself with great authors; and that comparison has annihilated all the flattery that self-love could suggest. I know how trifling my own writings are, and how far below the standard that constitutes excellence: as for the shades that distinguish the degrees of mediocrity, they are not

worth discrimination; and he must be very modest, or easily satisfied, who can be content to glimmer for an instant a little more than his brethren glow-worms. Mine, therefore, you find, Sir, is not humility, but pride. When young, I wished for fame; not examining whether I was capable of attaining it, nor considering in what lights fame was desirable. There are two sorts of honest fame; *that* attendant on the truly great, and that better sort that is due to the good. I fear I did not aim at the latter; nor discovered, till too late, that I could not compass the former. Having neglected the best road, and having, instead of the other, strolled into a narrow path that led to no good worth seeking, I see the idleness of my journey, and hold it more graceful to abandon my wanderings to chance or oblivion, than to mark solicitude for trifles, which I think so myself.

I beg your pardon for talking so much of myself; but an answer was due to the unmerited attention which you have paid to my writings. I turn with more pleasure to speak on yours. Forgive me if I shall blame you, whether you either abandon your intention, or are too impatient to execute it.¹ Your preface proves that you are capable of treating the subject ably; but allow me to repeat, that it is a work that ought not to be performed impetuously. A mere recapitulation of authenticated facts would be dry; a more enlarged plan would demand much acquaintance with the characters of the actors, and with the probable sources of measures. The present time is accustomed to details and anecdotes; and the age immediately preceding one's own is less known to any man than the history of any other period. You are young enough, Sir, to collect information on many particulars that will occur in your progress, from living actors, at least from their contemporaries; and, great as your ardour may be, you will find yourself delayed by the want of materials, and by farther necessary inquiries. As you have variety of talents, why should not you exercise them on works that will admit of more rapidity; and at the same time, in leisure moments,

¹ Of writing a history of the reign of George the Second.

commence, digest, and enrich your plan by collecting new matter for it?

In one word, I have too much zeal for your credit, not to dissuade you from precipitation in a work of the kind you meditate. That I speak sincerely you are sure; as accident, not design, made you acquainted with my admiration of your tract on medals. If I wish to delay your history, it must be from wishing that it may appear with more advantages; and I must speak disinterestedly, as my age will not allow me to hope to see it, if not finished soon. I should not forgive myself if I turned you from prosecution of your work; but, as I am certain that my writings can have given you no opinion of my having sound and deep judgment, pray follow your own, and allow no merit but that of sincerity and zeal to the sentiments of yours, &c.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 13, 1784.

THANK you a thousand times, dear Madam, for your obliging letter and the new *Bristol stones* you have sent me, which would pass on a more skilful lapidary than I am for having been brillanted by a professed artist, if you had not told me that they came shining out of a native mine, and had no foreign diamond-dust to polish them. Indeed, can one doubt any longer that Bristol is as rich and warm a soil as India? I am convinced it has been so of late years, though I question its having been so luxuriant in Alderman Canning's days; and I have MORE reasons for thinking so, than from the marvels of Chatterton.—But I will drop metaphors, lest some nabob should take me *au pié de la lettre*, fit out an expedition, plunder your city, and massacre you for weighing *too many* carats.

Seriously, Madam, I am surprised—and chiefly at the kind of genius of this unhappy female.¹ Her ear, as you remark,

¹ Mrs. Yearsley, the milkwoman of Bristol, whose talent was discovered

is perfect; but that, being a gift of nature, amazes me less. Her expressions are more exalted than poetic; and discover taste, as you say, rather than discover flights of fancy and wild ideas, as one should expect. I should therefore advise her quitting blank verse, which wants the highest colouring to distinguish it from prose; whereas her taste, and probably good sense, might give sufficient beauty to her rhymes. Her not being learned is another reason against her writing in blank verse. Milton employed all his reading, nay, all his geographic knowledge, to enrich his language, and succeeded. They who have imitated him in that particular, have been mere monkeys; and they who neglected it, flat and poor.

Were I not persuaded by the samples you have sent me, Madam, that this woman has talents, I should not advise her encouraging her propensity, lest it should divert her from the care of her family, and, after the novelty is over, leave her worse than she was. When the late Queen patronised Stephen Duck,¹ who was only a wonder at first, and had not genius enough to support the character he had promised, twenty artisans and labourers turned poets, and starved.² Your poetess can scarce be more miserable than she is, and even the reputation of being an authoress may procure her

by Miss Hannah More, who solicited for her the protection of Mrs. Montagu, in a prefatory letter prefixed to her Poems, published in quarto, in the year 1785.—E.

¹ Some of Stephen Duck the thrasher's verses having been shown to Queen Caroline, she settled twelve shillings a-week upon him, and appointed him keeper of her select library at Richmond. He afterwards took orders, and obtained the living of Byfleet, in Surrey; but growing melancholy, in 1750 he threw himself into the river, near Reading, and was drowned. Swift wrote upon him the following epigram:—

“ The thrasher, Duck, could o'er the Queen prevail;
The proverb says, ‘ No fence against a flail!’
From *threshing* corn, he turns to thresh his brains,
For which her Majesty allows him *grains*;
Though 'tis confest, that those who ever saw
His poems, think them all not worth a *straw*.
Thrice happy Duck! employ'd in threshing *stubble*,
Thy toil is lessen'd, and thy profits double.”—E.

² “ Robert Bloomfield,” says Mr. Crabbe, in his Journal for 1817, “ had better have rested as a shoemaker, or even a farmer's boy; for he would have been a farmer perhaps in time, and now he is an unfortunate poet.” Poor John Clare, it will be recollected, died in a workhouse.—E.

customers: but as poetry is one of your least excellencies, Madam (your virtues will forgive me), I am sure you will not only give her counsels for her works, but for her conduct; and your gentleness will blend them so judiciously, that she will mind the friend as well as the mistress. She must remember that she is a Lactilla, not a Pastora; and is to tend real cows, not Arcadian sheep.

What! if I should go a step farther, dear Madam, and take the liberty of reproving you for putting into this poor woman's hands such a frantic thing as *The Castle of Otranto*? It was fit for nothing but the age in which it was written: an age in which much was known; that required only to be amused, nor cared whether its amusements were conformable to truth and the models of good sense; that could not be spoiled; was in no danger of being too credulous; and rather wanted to be brought back to imagination, than to be led astray by it: — but you will have made a hurly-burly in this poor woman's head, which it cannot develope and digest.

I will not reprove, without suggesting something in my turn. Give her Dryden's *Cock and Fox*, the standard of good sense, poetry, nature, and ease. I would recommend others of his tales: but her imagination is already too gloomy, and should be enlivened; for which reason I do not name Mr. Gray's *Eton Ode* and *Church-yard*. Prior's *Solomon* (for I doubt his *Alma*, though far superior, is too learned for her limited reading,) would be very proper. In truth, I think the cast of the age (I mean in its compositions) is too *sombre*. The flimsy giantry of Ossian has introduced mountainous horrors. The exhibitions at Somerset-house are crowded with Brobdignag ghosts. Read and explain to her a charming poetic familiarity called the *Blue-stocking Club*. If she has not your other pieces, might I take the liberty, Madam, of begging you to buy them for her, and let me be in your debt? And that your lessons may win their way more easily, even though her heart be good, will you add a guinea or two, as you see proper? And though I do not love to be named, yet, if it would encourage a subscription, I should have no scruple. It will be best to begin mode-

rately; for, if she should take Hippocrene for Pactolus, we may hasten her ruin, not contribute to her fortune.

On recollection, you had better call me Mr. Anybody, than name my name, which I fear is in bad odour at Bristol, on poor Chatterton's account; and it may be thought that I am atoning his ghost: though, if his friends would show my letters to him, you would find that I was as tender to him as to your milkwoman: but *that* they have never done, among other instances of their injustice. However, I beg you to say nothing on that subject, as I have declared I would not.

I have seen our excellent friend in Clarges-street: she complains as usual of her deafness; but I assure you it is at least not worse, nor is her weakness. Indeed I think both her and Mr. Vesey better than last winter. When will you *blue-stocking* yourself and come amongst us? Consider how many of us are veterans; and, though we do not trudge on foot according to the institution, we may be out at heels—and the heel, you know, Madam, has never been privileged.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Sunday night, Nov. 28, 1784.

I HAVE received the parcel of papers you sent me, which I conclude come from Lord Strafford, and will apply them as well as I possibly can, you may be sure, but with little hope of doing any good: humanity is no match for cruelty. There are now and then such angelic beings as Mr. Hanway and Mr. Howard; but our race in general is pestilently bad and malevolent. I have been these two years wishing to promote my excellent friend Mr. Porter's plan for alleviating the woes of chimney-sweepers, but never could make impression on three people; on the contrary, have generally caused a smile.

George Conway's intelligence of hostilities commenced between the Dutch and Imperialists makes me suppose that France will support the former—or could they resist? Yet I had heard that France would not. Some have thought,

as I have done, that a combination of partition would happen between Austria, France, and Prussia, the modern law of nations for avoiding wars. I know nothing: so my conjectures may all be erroneous; especially as one argues from reason; a very inadequate judge, as it leaves passions, caprices, and accidents, out of its calculation. It does not seem the interest of France, that the Emperor's power should increase in their neighbourhood and extend to the sea. Consequently it is France's interest to protect Holland in concert with Prussia. This last is a transient power, and may determine on the death of the present King; but the Imperial is a permanent force, and must be the enemy of France, however present connections may incline the scale.

In any case, I hope we shall no way be hooked into the quarrel; not only from the impotence of our circumstances, but as I think it would decide the loss of Ireland, which seems tranquillizing: but should we have any bickering with France, she would renew the manœuvres she practised so fatally in America. These are my politics; I do not know with whose they coincide or disagree, nor does it signify a straw. Nothing will depend on my opinion; nor have I any opinion about them, but when I have nothing at all to do that amuses me more, or nothing else to fill a letter.

I can give you a sample of my idleness, which may divert Lady Ailesbury and your academy of arts and sciences for a minute in the evening. It came into my head yesterday to send a card to Lady Lyttelton, to ask when she would be in town; here it is in an heroic epistle:—

From a castle as vast as the castles on signs,—
From a hill that all Africa's molehills outshines,
This epistle is sent to a cottage so small,
That the door cannot ope if you stand in the hall,
To a lady who would be fifteen, if her knight
And old swain were as young as Methusalem quite:
It comes to inquire, not whether her eyes
Are as radiant as ever, but how many sighs
He must vent to the rocks and the echos around,
(Though nor echo nor rock in the parish is found,)
Before she, obdurate, his passion will meet—
His passion to see her in Portugal-street?

As the sixth line goes rather too near the core, do not give a copy of it: however, I should be sorry if it displeased; though I do not believe it will, but be taken with good-humour as it was meant.¹

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, April 5, 1785.

HAD I not heard part of your conversation with Mrs. Carter the other night, Madam, I should certainly not have discovered the authoress of the very ingenious anticipation of our future jargon.² How should I? I am not fortunate enough to know all your talents; nay, I question whether you yourself suspect all you possess. Your *Bas Bleu* is in a style very different from any of your other productions that I have seen; and this letter, which shows your intuition into the degeneracy of our language, has a vein of humour and satire that could not be calculated from your *Bas Bleu*, in which good-nature and good-humour had made a great deal of learn-

¹ It was taken in perfect good-humour; and Lady Lyttelton returned the following answer, which Mr. Walpole owned was better than his address:—

“Remember’d, though old, by a wit and a beau!
I shall fancy, ere long, I’m a Ninon l’Enclos!
I must feel impatient such kindness to meet,
And shall hasten my flight into Portugal-street.”

Ripley Cottage, 28th Nov.

² This is an answer to the following anonymous letter, sent to Mr. Walpole by Miss Hannah More, ridiculing the prevailing adoption of French idioms into the English language. There is not in this satirical epistle one French word nor one English idiom:—

“A Specimen of the English Language, as it will probably be written and spoken in the next century. In a letter from a lady to her friend, in the reign of George the Fifth.

“Alamode Castle, June 20, 1840.

“DEAR MADAM,

“I NO sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces: the small room, which gives upon the garden, is practised through the great one; and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilette, than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, where sleep came to surprise me.

“My lord and I are on the intention to make good cheer, and a great expense; and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse

ing wear all the ease of familiarity. I did wish you to write another Percy, but I beg now that you will first produce a specimen of *all* the various manners in which you can shine; for, since you are as modest as if your issue were illegitimate, I don't know but, like some females really in fault, you would stifle some of your pretty infants, rather than be detected and blush.

In the mean time, I beseech you not only to print your Specimen of the Language that is to be in fashion, but have it entered at Stationers'-hall; or depend upon it, if ever a copy falls into the hands of a fine gentleman yet unborn, who shall be able both to read and write, he will adopt your letter for his own, and the Galimatias will give the ton to the court, as Euphues did near two hundred years ago; and then you will have corrupted our language instead of defending it: and surely it is not *your* interest, Madam, to have pure English grow obsolete.

If you do not promise to grant my request, I will show your letter everywhere to those that are worthy of seeing it; that is, indeed, in very few places; for you *shall* have the honour of

oneself. All that England has of illustrious, all that youth has of amiable, or beauty of ravishing, sees itself in this quarter. Render yourself here, then, my friend; and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, whether for letters, whether for birth.

"Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat; the dinner was of the last perfection, and the wines left nothing to desire. The repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing sallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another. Lady Frances charmed me as for the first time; she is made to paint, has a great air, and has infinitely of expression in her physiognomy; her manners have as much of natural as her figure has of interesting.

"I had prayed Lady B. to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her; but I am now disabused on her subject: she is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconstant, and subject to caution; but having evaded with one of her pretenders, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend, on whose fidelity she reposed herself; she is, therefore, fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is detested at her house. Though she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of Sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, though this is always a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great sayer of nothings; it is a spoilt mind, full of fatuity and pretension: his conversation is a tissue of impertinences, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little care of his word; but, as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women all throw themselves at his head. Adieu!"

it. It is one of those compositions that prove themselves standards, by begetting imitations; and if the genuine parent is unknown, it will be ascribed to everybody that is supposed (in his own set) to have more wit than the rest of the world. I should be diverted, I own, to hear it faintly disavowed by some who would wish to pass for its authors: but still there is more pleasure in doing justice to merit, than in drawing vain pretensions into a scrape; and, therefore, I think you and I had better be honest and acknowledge it, though to you (for I am out of the question, but as evidence) it will be painful; for though the proverb says, "Tell truth and shame the devil," I believe he is never half so much confounded as a certain amiable young gentlewoman, who is discovered to have more taste and abilities than she ever ventured to ascribe to herself even in the most private dialogues with her own heart, especially when that native friend is so pure as to have no occasion to make allowances even for self-love. For my part, I am most seriously obliged to you, Madam, for so agreeable and kind a communication.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

June 22, 1785.

SINCE I received your book,² Sir, I scarce ceased from reading till I had finished it; so admirable I found it, and so full of good sense, brightly delivered. Nay, I am pleased with myself too for having formed the same opinions with you

¹ Now first collected.

² His "Letters of Literature," published this year under the name of Heron. "It had been well for Mr. Pinkerton's reputation," observes Mr. Dawson Turner, "had these Letters never been published at all. In a copy now before me, lately the property of one of our most eminent critics, Mr. Park, I read the following very just quotation, in his handwriting: 'Multa venustè, multa tenuiter, multa cum bile.' Mr. Pinkerton himself, in his 'Walpoliana,' admits that Heron's Letters was 'a book written in early youth, and contained many juvenile crude ideas long since abandoned by its author.' Would that 'the crudeness of many of the ideas' were the worst that was to be said of it! but we shall find, in the course of this correspondence, far heavier and not less just complaints. The name of Heron, here assumed by Mr. Pinkerton, was that of his mother."—E.

on several points, in which we do not agree with the generality of men. On some topics, I confess frankly, I do not concur with you: considering how many you have touched, it would be wonderful if we agreed on all, or I should not be sincere if I said I did. There are others on which I have formed no opinion; for I should give myself an impertinent air, with no truth, if I pretended to have any knowledge of many subjects, of which, young as you are, you seem to have made yourself master. Indeed, I have gone deeply into nothing, and therefore shall not discuss those heads on which we differ most; as probably I should not defend my own opinions well. There is but one part of your work to which I will venture any objection, though you have considered it much, and I little, very little indeed, with regard to your proposal, which to me is but two days old: I mean your plan for the improvement of our language, which I allow has some defects, and which wants correction in several particulars. The specific amendment which you propose, and to which I object, is the addition of *a*'s and *o*'s to our terminations. To change *s* for *a* in the plural number of our substantives and adjectives would be so violent an alteration, that I believe neither the power of Power nor the power of Genius would be able to effect it. In most cases I am convinced that very strong innovations are more likely to make impression than small and almost imperceptible differences, as in religion, medicine, politics, &c.; but I do not think that language can be treated in the same manner, especially in a refined age. When a nation first emerges from barbarism, two or three masterly writers may operate wonders; and the fewer the number of writers, as the number is small at such a period, the more absolute is their authority. But when a country has been polishing itself for two or three centuries, and when consequently authors are innumerable, the most supereminent genius (or whoever is esteemed so, though without foundation,) possesses very limited empire, and is far from meeting implicit obedience. Every petty writer will contest very novel institutions: every inch of change in any language will be disputed; and the language will remain as it was, longer than the tribunal which should dictate very hete-

irregular alterations. With regard to adding *a* or *o* to final consonants, consider, Sir, should the usage be adopted; what havoc it would make! All our poetry would be defective in metre, or would become at once as obsolete as Chaucer; and could we promise ourselves, that, though we should acquire better harmony and more rhymes, we should have a new crop of poets, to replace Milton, Dryden, Gray, and, I am sorry you will not allow me to add, Pope! You might enjoin our prose to be reformed, as you have done by the Spectator in your thirty-fourth Letter; but try Dryden's Ode by your new institution.

I beg your pardon for these trivial observations: I assure you I could write a letter ten times as long, if I were to specify all I like in your work. I more than like most of it; and I am charmed with your glorious love of liberty, and your other humane and noble sentiments. Your book I shall with great pleasure send to Mr. Colman: may I tell him, without naming you, that it is written by the author of the comedy I offered to him? He must be struck with your very handsome and generous conduct in printing your encomiums on him, after his rejecting your piece. It is as great as uncommon, and gives me as good an opinion of your heart, Sir, as your book does of your great sense. Both assure me that you will not take ill the liberty I have used in expressing my doubts on your plan for amending our language, or for any I may use in dissenting from a few other sentiments in your work; as I shall in what I think your too low opinion of some of the French writers, of your preferring Lady Mary Wortley to Madame de Sévigné, and of your esteeming Mr. Hume a man of a deeper and more solid understanding than Mr. Gray. In the two last articles it is impossible to think more differently than we do. In Lady Mary's Letters, which I never could read but once, I discovered no merit of any sort; yet I have seen others by her (unpublished)¹ that have a good deal of wit; and for Mr. Hume, give me leave to say that I think your opinion, "that he might have ruled a state," ought to be qualified a little; as

¹ See vol. iv. p. 272.—E.

in the very next page you say, his History is "a mere apology for prerogative," and a very weak one. If he could have ruled a state, one must presume, at best, that he would have been an able tyrant; and yet I should suspect that a man, who, sitting coolly in his chamber, could forge but a weak apology for the prerogative, would not have exercised it very wisely. I knew personally and well both Mr. Hume and Mr. Gray, and thought there was no degree of comparison between their understandings; and, in fact, Mr. Hume's writings were so superior to his conversation, that I frequently said he understood nothing till he had written upon it. What you say, Sir, of the discord in his history from his love of prerogative and hatred of churchmen, flatters me much; as I have taken notice of that very unnatural discord in a piece I printed some years ago, but did not publish, and which I will show to you when I have the pleasure of seeing you here; a satisfaction I shall be glad to taste, whenever you will let me know you are at leisure after the beginning of next week. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

June 26, 1785.

I HAVE sent your book to Mr. Colman, Sir, and must desire you in return to offer my grateful thanks to Mr. Knight, who has done me an honour, to which I do not know how I am entitled, by the present of his poetry, which is very classic, and beautiful, and tender, and of chaste simplicity.

To *your* book, Sir, I am much obliged on many accounts; particularly for having recalled my mind to subjects of delight, to which it was grown dulled by age and indolence. In consequence of your reclaiming it, I asked myself whence you feel so much disregard for certain authors whose fame is established: you have assigned good reasons for withholding your approbation from some, on the plea of their being imitators:

¹ Now first collected.

it was natural, then, to ask myself again, whence they had obtained so much celebrity. I think I have discovered a cause, which I do not remember to have seen noted; and *that* cause I suspect to have been, that certain of those authors possessed grace:—do not take me for a disciple of Lord Chesterfield, nor imagine that I mean to erect grace into a capital ingredient of writing; but I do believe that it is a perfume that will preserve from putrefaction, and is distinct even from style, which regards expression. *Grace*, I think, belongs to *manner*. It is from the charm of grace that I believe some authors, not in your favour, obtained part of their renown; Virgil in particular: and yet I am far from disagreeing with you on his subject in general. There is such a dearth of invention in the *Æneid*, (and when he did invent, it was often so foolishly,) so little good sense, so little variety, and so little power over the passions, that I have frequently said, from contempt for his matter, and from the charm of his harmony, that I believe I should like his poem better, if I was to hear it repeated, and did not understand Latin. On the other hand, he has more than harmony: whatever he utters is said gracefully, and he ennobles his images, especially in the *Georgics*; or at least it is more sensible there from the humility of the subject. A Roman farmer might not understand his diction in agriculture; but he made a Roman courtier understand farming, the farming of that age, and could captivate a lord of Augustus's bedchamber, and tempt him to listen to themes of rusticity. On the contrary, Statius and Claudian, though talking of war, would make a soldier despise them as bullies. That graceful manner of thinking in Virgil seems to me to be more than style, if I do not refine too much; and I admire, I confess, Mr. Addison's phrase, that Virgil "tossed about his dung with an air of majesty." A style may be excellent without grace: for instance, Dr. Swift's. Eloquence may bestow an immortal style, and one of more dignity; yet eloquence may want that ease, that genteel air that flows from or constitutes grace. Addison himself was master of that grace, even in his pieces of humour, and which do not owe their merit to style; and from that combined secret he excels all

men that ever lived, but Shakspeare, in humour, by never dropping into an approach towards burlesque and buffoonery, when even his humour descended to characters that in any other hands would have been vulgarly low. Is not it clear that Will Wimble¹ was a gentleman, though he always lived at a distance from good company? Fielding had as much humour, perhaps, as Addison; but, having no idea of grace, is perpetually disgusting. His innkeepers and parsons are the grossest of their profession; and his gentlemen are awkward, when they should be at their ease.

The Grecians had grace in everything; in poetry, in oratory, in statuary, in architecture, and, probably, in music and painting. The Romans, it is true, were their imitators; but, having grace too, imparted it to their copies, which gave them a merit that almost raises them to the rank of originals. Horace's Odes acquired their fame, no doubt, from the graces of his manner and purity of his style,—the chief praise of Tibullus and Propertius, who certainly cannot boast of more meaning than Horace's Odes.

Waller, whom you proscribe, Sir, owed his reputation to the graces of his manner, though he frequently stumbled, and even fell flat; but a few of his smaller pieces are as graceful as possible: one might say that he excelled in painting ladies in enamel, but could not succeed in portraits in oil, large as life. Milton had such superior merit, that I will only say, that if his angels, his Satan, and his Adam have as much dignity as the Apollo Belvidere, his Eve has all the delicacy and graces of the Venus of Medicis; as his description of Eden has the colouring of Albano. Milton's tenderness imprints ideas as graceful as Guido's Madonnas: and the Allegro, Penseroso, and Comus might be denominated from the three Graces; as the Italians gave similar titles to two or three of Petrarch's best sonnets.

Cowley, I think, would have had grace, (for his mind was graceful,) if he had had any ear, or if his taste had not been vitiated by the pursuit of wit; which, when it does not offer

¹ See Spectator, No. 109. Will Wimble was a Yorkshire gentleman, whose name was Thomas Morecroft.—E.

itself naturally, degenerates into tinsel or pertness. Pertness is the mistaken affectation of grace, as pedantry produces erroneous dignity: the familiarity of the one, and the clumsiness of the other, distort or prevent grace. Nature, that furnishes samples of all qualities, and on the scale of gradation exhibits all possible shades, affords us types that are more apposite than words. The eagle is sublime, the lion majestic, the swan graceful, the monkey pert, the bear ridiculously awkward. I mention these, as more expressive and comprehensive than I could make definitions of my meaning; but I will apply the swan only, under whose wings I will shelter an apology for Racine, whose pieces give me an idea of that bird. The colouring of the swan is pure; his attitudes are graceful; he never displeases you when sailing on his proper element. His feet may be ugly, his notes hissing, not musical, his walk not natural; he can soar, but it is with difficulty:—still, the impression the swan leaves is that of grace. So does Racine.

Boileau may be compared to the dog, whose sagacity is remarkable, as well as its fawning on its master, and its snarling at those it dislikes. If Boileau was too austere to admit the pliability of grace, he compensates by good sense and propriety. He is like (for I will drop animals) an upright magistrate, whom you respect, but whose justice and severity leave an awe that discourages familiarity. His copies of the ancients may be too servile; but, if a good translator deserves praise, Boileau deserves more. He certainly does not fall below his originals; and, considering at what period he wrote, has greater merit still. By his imitations he held out to his countrymen models of taste, and banished totally the bad taste of his predecessors. For his *Lutrin*, replete with excellent poetry, wit, humour, and satire, he certainly was not obliged to the ancients. Excepting Horace, how little idea had either Greeks or Romans of wit and humour! Aristophanes and Lucian, compared with moderns, were, the one a blackguard, and the other a buffoon. In my eyes, the *Lutrin*, the *Dispensary*, and the *Rape of the Lock*, are standards of grace and elegance, not to be paralleled by antiquity; and eternal reproaches to Voltaire, whose indelicacy in the *Pucelle de-*

graded him as much, when compared with the three authors I have named, as his *Henriade* leaves Virgil, and even Lucan whom he more resembles, by far his superiors.

The *Dunciad* is blemished by the offensive images of the games; but the poetry appears to me admirable; and, though the fourth book has obscurities, I prefer it to the three others: it has descriptions not surpassed by any poet that ever existed, and which surely a writer merely ingenious¹ will never equal. The lines on Italy, on Venice, on Convents, have all the grace for which I contend as distinct from poetry, though united with the most beautiful; and the Rape of the Lock, besides the originality of great part of the invention, is a standard of graceful writing.

In general, I believe that what I call grace, is denominated elegance; but by grace I mean something higher. I will explain myself by instances—Apollo is graceful, Mercury elegant. Petrarch, perhaps, owed his whole merit to the harmony of his numbers and the graces of his style. They conceal his poverty of meaning and want of variety. His complaints, too, may have added an interest, which, had his passion been successful, and had expressed itself with equal sameness, would have made the number of his sonnets insupportable. Melancholy in poetry, I am inclined to think, contributes to grace, when it is not disgraced by pitiful lamentations, such as Ovid's and Cicero's in their banishments. We respect melancholy, because it imparts a similar affection, pity. A gay writer, who should only express satisfaction without variety, would soon be nauseous.

Madame de Sévigné shines both in grief and gaiety. There is too much of sorrow for her daughter's absence; yet it is always expressed by new terms, by new images, and often by wit, whose tenderness has a melancholy air.

¹ Pinkerton had said of Pope, that "he could only rank with *ingenious* men," and that "his works are superabundant with superfluous and unmeaning verbiage; his translations even replete with tautology, a fault which is to refinement as midnight is to noon-day; and, what is truly surprising, that the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, his last publication, is more full of redundancy and incorrectness than his *Pastorals*, which are his first."—D. T.

When she forgets her concern, and returns to her natural disposition—gaiety, every paragraph has novelty; her allusions, her applications are the happiest possible. She has the art of making you acquainted with all her acquaintance, and attaches you even to the spots she inhabited. Her language is correct, though unstudied; and, when her mind is full of any great event, she interests you with the warmth of a dramatic writer, not with the chilling impartiality of an historian. Pray read her accounts of the death of Turenne, and of the arrival of King James in France, and tell me whether you do not know their persons as if you had lived at the time.

For my part, if you will allow me a word of digression, (not that I have written with any method,) I hate the cold impartiality recommended to historians: "*Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi:*" but, that I may not wander again, nor tire, nor contradict you any more, I will finish now, and shall be glad if you will dine at Strawberry Hill next Sunday and take a bed there, when I will tell you how many more parts of your book have pleased me, than have startled my opinions, or perhaps prejudices. I have the honour to be, Sir, with regard, &c.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, July 27, 1785.

You thank me much more than the gift deserved, Sir: my editions of such pieces as I have left, are waste paper to me. I will not sell them at the ridiculously advanced prices that are given for them: indeed, only such as were published for sale, have I sold at all; and therefore the duplicates that remain with me are to me of no value, but when I can oblige a friend with them. Of a few of my impressions I have no copy but my own set; and, as I could give you only an imperfect collection, the present was really only a parcel of

¹ Now first collected.

fragments. My memory was in fault about the Royal and Noble Authors. I thought I had given them to you. I recollect now that I only lent you my own copy; but I have others in town, and you shall have them when I go thither. For Vertue's manuscript I am in no manner of haste. I heard on Monday, in London, that the *Letters* were written by a Mr. Pilkington, probably from a confounded information of Maty's Review: my chief reason for calling on you twice this week, was to learn what you had heard, and I shall be much obliged to you for farther information; as I do not care to be too inquisitive, lest I should be suspected of knowing more of the matter.

There are many reasons, Sir, why I cannot come into your idea of printing Greek. In the first place, I have two or three engagements for my press; and my time of life does not allow me to look but a little way farther. In the next, I cannot now go into new expenses of purchase: my fortune is very much reduced, both by my brother's death, and by the late plan of reformation. The last reason would weigh with me, had I none of the others. My admiration of the Greeks was a little like that of the mob on other points, not from sound knowledge. I never was a good Greek scholar; have long forgotten what I knew of the language; and, as I never disguise my ignorance of anything, it would look like affectation to print Greek authors. I could not bear to print them, without owning that I do not understand them; and such a confession would perhaps be as much affectation as unfounded pretensions. I must, therefore, stick to my simplicity, and not go out of my line. It is difficult to divest one's self of vanity, because impossible to divest one's self of self-love. If one runs from one glaring vanity, one is caught by its opposite. Modesty can be as vain-glorious on the ground, as Pride on a triumphal car. Modesty, however, is preferable; for, should she contradict her professions, still she keeps her own secret, and does not hurt the pride of others. I have the honour to be, Sir, with great regard, yours.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 18, 1785.

I AM sorry, dear Sir, that I must give you unanswerable reasons why I cannot print the work you recommend.² I have been so much solicited since I set up my press to employ it for others, that I was forced to make it a rule to listen to no such applications. I refused Lord Hardwicke to print a publication of his; Lady Mary Forbes, to print letters of her ancestor, Lord Essex; and the Countess of Aldborough, to print her father's poems, though in a piece as small as what you mention.

These I recollect at once, besides others whose recommendations do not immediately occur to my memory; though I dare to say *they* do remember them, and would resent my breaking my rule. I have other reasons which I will not detail now, as the post goes out so early: I will only beg you not to treat me with so much ceremony, nor ever use the word *humbly* to me, who am no ways intitled to such respect.

One private gentleman is not superior to another in essentials: I fear the virtues of an untainted young heart are preferable to those of an old man long conversant with the world; and in the soundness of understanding you have shown and will show a depth which has not fallen to the lot of

Your sincere humble servant.

¹ Now first collected.

² It is impossible to say with certainty what is the work here alluded to; but, most probably, it was Ailred's Life of St. Ninian, of which it appears, from a letter from the Rev. Rogers Ruding, dated August 4, 1785, that Mr. Pinkerton obtained at this time a transcript through him from the manuscript in the Bodleian Library. Pinkerton speaks of this manuscript, in the second volume of his Early Scottish History, p. 266, as "a meagre piece, containing very little as to Ninian's *Pikish Mission*." The letter alluded to from Mr. Ruding shows Pinkerton to have turned his mind to the antiquities of Scotland with great earnestness.—D. T.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1785.

You are too modest, Sir, in asking my advice on a point on which you could have no better guide than your own judgment. If I presume to give you my opinion, it is from zeal for your honour. I think it would be below you to make a regular answer to anonymous scribblers in a Magazine: you had better wait to see whether any formal reply is made to your book, and whether by any avowed writer; to whom, if he writes sensibly and decently, you may condescend to make an answer. Still, as you say you have been misquoted, I should not wish you to be quite silent, though I should like better to have you turn such enemies into ridicule. A foe who misquotes you, ought to be a welcome antagonist. He is so humble as to confess, when he censures what you have *not* said, that he cannot confute what you have said; and he is so kind as to furnish you with an opportunity of proving him a liar, as you may refer to your book to detect him.

This is what I would do; I would specify, in the same Magazine in which he has attacked you, your real words, and those he has imputed to you; and then appeal to the equity of the reader. You may guess that the shaft comes from somebody whom you have censured; and thence you may draw a fair conclusion, that you had been in the right to laugh at one who was reduced to put his own words into your mouth before he could find fault with them; and, having so done, whatever indignation he has excited in the reader must recoil on himself, as the offensive passages will come out to have been his own, not yours. You might even begin with loudly condemning the words or thoughts imputed to you, as if you retracted them; and then, as if you turned to your book, and found that you had said no such thing there as what you was ready to retract, the ridicule would be doubled on your adversary.

¹ Now first collected.

Something of this kind is the most I would stoop to ; but I would take the utmost care not to betray a grain of more anger than is implied in contempt and ridicule. Fools can only revenge themselves by provoking ; for then they bring you to a level with themselves. The good sense of your work will support it ; and there is scarce a reason for defending it, but, by keeping up a controversy, to make it more noticed ; for the age is so idle and indifferent, that few objects strike, unless parties are formed for or against them. I remember many years ago advising some acquaintance of mine, who were engaged in the direction of the Opera, to raise a competition between two of their singers, and have papers written pro and con. ; for then numbers would go to clap and hiss the rivals respectively, who would not go to be pleased with the music.

TO GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 19, 1785.

SIR,

I BEG your acceptance of a little work just printed here ; and I offer it as a token of my gratitude, not as pretending to pay you for your last present. A translation, however excellent, from a very inferior Horace,² would be a most inadequate return ; but there is so much merit in the enclosed version, the language is so pure, and the imitations of our poets so extraordinary, so much more faithful and harmonious than I thought the French tongue could achieve, that I flatter myself you will excuse my troubling you with an old performance of my own, when newly dressed by a master-hand. As, too, there are not a great many copies printed, and those only for presents, I have particular pleasure in making you one of the earliest compliments.

¹ Now first printed.

² The Duc de Nivernois' translation of Walpole's Essay on Gardening.—E.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 23, 1785.

YOUR lordship is too condescending when you incline to keep up a correspondence with one who can expect to maintain it but a short time, and whose intervals of health are resigned to idleness, not dedicated, as they have sometimes been, to literary pursuits; for what could I pursue with any prospect of accomplishment? or what avails it to store a memory that must lose faster than it acquires? Your lordship's zeal for illuminating your country and countrymen is laudable; and you are young enough to make a progress: but a man who touches the verge of his sixty-eighth year, ought to know that he is unfit to contribute to the amusement of more active minds. This consideration, my lord, makes me much decline correspondence: having nothing new to communicate, I perceive that I fill my letters with apologies for having nothing to say.

If you can tap the secret stores of the Vatican, your lordship will probably much enrich the treasury of letters. Rome may have preserved many valuable documents, as for ages intelligence from all parts of Europe centred there; but I conclude that they have hoarded little that might at any period lay open the share they had in most important transactions. History, indeed, is fortunate when even incidentally and collaterally it lights on authentic information.

Perhaps, my lord, there is another repository, and nearer, which it would be worth while to endeavour to penetrate: I mean, the Scottish College at Paris. I have heard formerly, that numbers of papers, of various sorts, were transported at the Reformation to Spain and Portugal: but, if preserved there, they probably are not accessible *yet*. If they were, how puny, how diminutive, would all such discoveries, and others which we might call of far greater magnitude, be to those of Herschel, who puts up millions of covies of worlds at

¹ Now first printed.

a beat! My conception is not ample enough to take in even a sketch of his glimpses; and, lest I should lose myself in attempting to follow his investigations, I recall my mind home, and apply it to reflect on what we thought we knew, when we imagined we knew something (which we deemed a vast deal) pretty correctly. Segrais, I think, it was, who said with much contempt, to a lady who talked of her star, "Your star! Madam, there are but two thousand stars in all; and do you imagine that you have a whole one to yourself?" The foolish dame, it seems, was not more ignorant than Segrais himself. If our system includes twenty millions of worlds, the lady had as much right to pretend to a whole ticket as the philosopher had to treat her like a servant-maid who buys a chance for a day in a state lottery.

Stupendous as Mr. Herschel's investigations are, and admirable as are his talents, his expression of *our retired corner of the universe*, seems a little improper. When a little emmet, standing on its ant-hill, could get a peep into infinity, how could he think he saw *a corner* in it?—a retired corner? Is there a bounded side to infinitude? If there are twenty millions of worlds, why not as many, and as many, and as many more? Oh! one's imagination cracks! I long to bait within distance of home, and rest at the moon. Mr. Herschel will content me if he can discover thirteen provinces there, well inhabited by men and women, and protected by the law of nations;¹ that law, which was enacted by Europe for its own emolument, to the prejudice of the other three parts of the globe, and which bestows the property of whole realms on the first person who happens to espy them, who can annex them to the crown of Great Britain, in lieu of those it has lost beyond the Atlantic.

I am very ignorant in astronomy, as ignorant as Segrais or the lady, and could wish to ask many questions; as, Whether our celestial globes must not be infinitely magnified? Our orreries, too, must not they be given to children, and new ones constructed, that will at least take in *our retired corner*

¹ The then thirteen united States of America.

and all its outlying constellations? Must not that host of worlds be christened? Mr. Herschel himself has stood godfather for his Majesty to the new Sidus. His Majesty, thank God! has a numerous issue; but they and all the princes and princesses in Europe cannot supply appellations enough for twenty millions of new-born stars: no, though the royal progenies of Austria, Naples, and Spain, who have each two dozen saints for sponsors, should consent to split their bead-rolls of names among the foundlings. But I find I talk like an old nurse; and your lordship at last will, I believe, be convinced that it is not worth your while to keep up a correspondence with a man in his dotage, merely because he has the honour of being, my lord, your lordship's most obedient servant.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 30, 1785.

I do not possess, nor ever looked into, one of the books you specify; nor Mabillon's "*Acta Sanctorum*," nor O'Flaherty's "*Ogygia*." My reading has been very idle, and trifling, and desultory; not that perhaps it has not been employed on authors as respectable as those you want to consult, nor that I had not rather read the deeds of sinners than *Acta Sanctorum*. I have no reverence but for sensible books, and consequently not for a great number; and had rather have read fewer than I have, than more. The rest may be useful on certain points, as they happen now to be to you; who, I am sure, would not read them for general use and pleasure, and are a very different kind of author. I shall like, I dare to say, anything you do write; but I am not overjoyed at your wading into the history of dark ages, unless you use it as a canvass to be embroidered with your own opinions, and episodes, and comparisons with more recent times. That is a most entertaining kind of writing. In general, I have seldom wasted

¹ Now first collected.

time on the origin of nations, unless for an opportunity of smiling at the gravity of the author, or at the absurdity of the manners of those ages; for absurdity and bravery compose almost all the anecdotes we have of them, except the accounts of what they never did, nor thought of doing.

I have a real affection for Bishop Hoadley: he stands with me in lieu of what are called the Fathers; and I am much obliged to you for offering to lend me a book of his: but, as my faith in him and his doctrines has long been settled, I shall not return to such grave studies, when I have so little time left, and desire only to pass it tranquilly, and without thinking of what I can neither propagate nor correct. When youth made me sanguine, I hoped mankind might be set right. Now that I am very old, I sit down with this lazy maxim; that, unless one could cure men of being fools, it is to no purpose to cure them of any folly, as it is only making room for some other. Self-interest is thought to govern every man; yet, is it possible to be less governed by self-interest than men are in the aggregate? Do not thousands sacrifice even their lives for single men? Is not it an established rule in France, that every person in that kingdom should love every king they have in his turn? What government is formed for general happiness? Where is not it thought heresy by the majority, to insinuate that the felicity of one man ought not to be preferred to that of millions? Had not I better, at sixty-eight, leave men to these preposterous notions, than return to Bishop Hoadley, and sigh? Not but I have a heartfelt satisfaction when I hear that a mind as liberal as his, and who has dared to utter sacred truths, meets with approbation and purchasers of his work. You must not, however, flatter yourself, Sir, that all your purchasers are admirers. Some will buy your book, because they have heard of opinions in it that offend them, and because they want to find matter in it for abusing you. Let them: the more it is discussed, the more strongly will your fame be established. I commend you for scorning any artifice to puff your book; but you must allow me to hope it will be attacked.

I have another satisfaction in the sale of your book; it will

occasion a second edition. What if, as you do not approve of confuting misquoters, you simply printed a list of their false quotations, referring to the identical sentences, at the end of your second edition? That will be preserving their infamy, which else would perish where it was born; and perhaps would deter others from similar forgeries. If any rational opponent staggers you on any opinion of yours, I would retract it; and that would be a second triumph. I am, perhaps, too impertinent and forward with advice: it is at best a proof of zeal; and you are under no obligation to follow my counsel. It is the weakness of old age to be apt to give advice; but I will fairly arm you against myself, by confessing that, when I was young, I was not apt to take any.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1785.

I WONDERED I did not hear from you, as I concluded you returned. You have made me good amends by the entertaining story of your travels. If I were not too disjointed for long journeys, I should like to see much of what you have seen; but if I had the agility of Vestris, I would not purchase all that pleasure for my eyes at the expense of my unsociability, which could not have borne the hospitality you experienced. It was always death to me, when I did travel England, to have lords and ladies receive me and show me their castles, instead of turning me over to their housekeeper: it hindered my seeing anything, and I was the whole time meditating my escape; but Lady Ailesbury and you are not such sensitive plants, nor shrink and close up if a stranger holds out a hand.

I don't wonder you was disappointed with Jarvis's windows at New College; I had foretold their miscarriage. The old and the new are as mismatched as an orange and a lemon, and destroy each other; nor is there room enough to retire back and see half of the new; and Sir Joshua's washy Virtues make the Nativity a dark spot from the darkness of the Shep-

herds, which happened, as I knew it would, from most of Jarvis's colours not being transparent.

I have not seen the improvements at Blenheim. I used to think it one of the ugliest places in England; a giant's castle, who had laid waste all the country round him. Everybody now allows the merit of Brown's achievements there.¹

Of all your survey I wish most to see Beau Desert. Warwick Castle and Stowe I know by heart. The first I had rather possess than any seat upon earth: not that I think it the most beautiful of all, though charming, but because I am so intimate with all its proprietors for the last thousand years.

I have often and often studied the new plan of Stowe: it is pompous; but though the wings are altered, they are not lengthened. Though three parts of the edifices in the garden are bad, they enrich that insipid country, and the vastness pleases me more than I can defend.

I rejoice that your jaunt has been serviceable to Lady Ailesbury. The *Charming man*² is actually with me; but neither he nor I can keep our promise incontinently. He expects two sons of his brother Sir William, whom he is to pack up and send to the Pères de l'Oratoire at Paris. I expect Lord and Lady Waldegrave to-morrow, who are to pass a few days with me; but both the Charming man and I will be with you soon. I have no objection to a wintry visit: as I can neither ride nor walk, it is more comfortable when most of my time is passed within doors. If I continue perfectly well, as I am, I shall not settle in town till after Christmas: there will not be half a dozen persons there for whom I care a straw.

¹ "Capability Brown;" for an account of whom, see vol. ii. p. 399. "I took," says Hannah More, "a very agreeable lecture from my friend Mr. Brown in his art, and he promised to give me taste by inoculation. I am sure he has a charming one; and he illustrates everything he says about gardening by some literary or grammatical allusion. He told me he compared his art to literary composition. 'Now, *there*,' said he, pointing his finger, 'I make a comma; and *there*,' pointing to another spot, 'where a more decided turn is proper, I make a colon: at another part (where an interruption is desirable to break the view), a parenthesis — now a full stop; and then I begin another subject.'" *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 26.—E.

² Edward Jerningham, Esq. See *post*, September 4, 1789.—E.

I know nothing at all. The peace between the Austrian harpy and the frogs is made. They were stout, and preferred being gobbled to parting with their money. At last, France offered to pay the money for them. The harpy blushed—for the first time—and would not take it; but signed the peace, and will plunder somebody else.

Have you got Boswell's most absurd enormous book?¹ The best thing in it is a bon-mot of Lord Pembroke.² The more one learns of Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the lowest bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness, and vanity; and Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the story of a mountebank and his zany.

I forgot to say, that I wonder how, with your turn, and knowledge, and enterprise, in scientific exploits, you came not to visit the Duke of Bridgwater's operations; or did you omit them, because I should not have understood a word you told me? Adieu!

TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.³

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 23, 1785.

As your lordship has given me this opportunity, I cannot resist saying, what I was exceedingly tempted to mention two or three years ago, but had not the confidence. In short, my lord, when the order of St. Patrick was instituted, I had a

¹ The "enormous book," of which Walpole here speaks so disparagingly, is Boswell's popular "Journal of his Tour to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland with Dr. Johnson, in the autumn of 1773." It is now incorporated with the author's general narrative of the Doctor's life in Mr. Croker's edition of 1831; and not the least interesting circumstance connected with it is, that Johnson himself read, from time to time, Boswell's record of his sayings and doings; and, so far from being displeased with its minuteness, expressed great admiration of its accuracy, and encouraged the chronicler to proceed with his grand ulterior proceeding. See Life, vol. i. p. viii. ed. 1835.—E.

² "Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, that Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow* way." Ibid, vol. iv. p. 8.—E.

³ Now first collected.

mind to hint to your lordship that it was exactly the moment for seizing an occasion that has been irretrievably lost to this country. When I was at Paris, I found in the convent of Les Grands Augustins three vast chambers filled with the portraits (and their names and titles beneath) of all the knights of the St. Esprit, from the foundation of the order. Every new knight, with few exceptions, gives his own portrait on his creation. Of the order of St. Patrick, I think but one founder is dead yet; and his picture perhaps may be retrieved. I will not make any apology to so good a patriot as your lordship, for proposing a plan that tends to the honour of his country, which I will presume to call mine too, as it is both by *union* and my affection for it. I should wish the name of the painter inscribed too, which would excite emulation in your artists. But it is unnecessary to dilate on the subject to your lordship; who, as a patron of the arts, as well as a patriot, will improve on my imperfect thoughts, and, if you approve of them, can give them stability. I have the honour to be, my lord, &c.

TO LADY BROWNE.¹

Berkeley Square, Dec. 14, 1785.

I AM extremely obliged to your ladyship for your kind letter; and, though I cannot write myself, I can dictate a few lines. This has not been a regular fit of the gout, but a worse case: one of my fingers opened with a deposit of chalk,² and brought on gout, and both together an inflammation and swelling almost up to my shoulder. In short, I was forced to have a surgeon, who has managed me so judiciously, that both the inflammation and swelling are gone; and nothing re-

¹ Now first printed.

² "Neither years nor sufferings," writes Hannah More to her sister, "can abate the entertaining powers of the pleasant Horace, which rather improve than decay; though he himself says he is only fit to be a milk-woman, as the *chalk-stones* at his fingers' ends qualify him for nothing but *scoring*; but he declares he will not be a *Bristol milk-woman*. I was obliged to recount to him all that odious tale." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 14.—E.

mains but the wound in my finger, which will heal as soon as all the chalk is discharged. My surgeon wishes me to take the air; but I am so afraid of a relapse, that I have not yet consented.

My poor old friend is a great loss;¹ but it did not much surprise me, and the manner comforts me. I had played at cards with her at Mrs. Gostling's three nights before I came to town, and found her extremely confused, and not knowing what she did: indeed, I perceived something of the sort before, and had found her much broken this autumn. It seems, that the day after I saw her, she went to General Lister's burial and got cold, and had been ill for two or three days. On the Wednesday morning she rose to have her bed made; and while sitting on the bed, with her maid by her, sunk down at once, and died without a pang or a groan. Poor Mr. Raftor is struck to the greatest degree, and for some days would not see anybody. I sent for him to town to me; but he will not come till next week. Mrs. Prado has been so excessively humane as to insist on his coming to her house till his sister is buried, which is to be to-night.

The Duchess does not come till the 26th. Poor Miss Bunbury is dead; and Mrs. Boughton, I hear, is in a very bad way. Lord John Russell has sent the Duchess of Bedford word, that he is on the point of marrying Lord Torrington's eldest daughter; and they suppose the wedding is over.² Your ladyship, I am sure, will be pleased to hear that Lord Euston is gone to his father, who has written a letter with the highest approbation of Lady Euston.³ You will be diverted, too, Madam, to hear that *Hecate* has told Mrs. Keppel, that she was sure that such virtue would be rewarded at last.

¹ The incomparable Kitty Clive; who died at Twickenham on the 6th of December, in her seventy-second year.—E.

² Lord John Russell, who, in 1802, succeeded his brother Francis as sixth Duke of Bedford, married, at Brussels, in March 1786, Georgiana Elizabeth, second daughter of Lord Torrington.—E.

³ Lord Euston, who, in 1811, succeeded his father as fourth Duke of Grafton, married, in November 1784, Charlotte Maria, daughter of the Earl of Waldegrave.—E.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 9, 1786.

It is very cruel, my dear Madam, when you send me such charming lines, and say such kind and flattering things to me, and of me, that I cannot even thank you with my own poor hand; and yet my hand is as much obliged to you as my eye, and ear, and understanding. My hand was in great pain when your present arrived. I opened it directly, and set to reading, till your music and my own vanity composed a quieting draught that glided to the ends of my fingers, and lulled the throbs into the deliquium that attends opium when it does not put one absolutely to sleep. I don't believe that the deity who formerly practised both poetry and physic, when gods got their livelihood by more than one profession, ever gave a recipe in rhyme; and therefore, since Dr. Johnson has prohibited application to pagan divinities, and Mr. Burke has not struck medicine and poetry out of the list of sinecures, I wish you may get a patent for life for exercising both faculties. It would be a comfortable event for me; for, since I cannot wait on you to thank you, nor dare ask you

——— to call your doves yourself,

and visit me in your Parnassian quality, I might send for you as my *physicianess*. Yet why should not I ask you to come and see me? You are not such a prude as to

——— blush to show compassion,

though it should

——— not chance this year to be the fashion.¹

And I can tell you, that powerful as your poetry is, and old as I am, I believe a visit from you would do me as much good almost as your verses.² In the meantime, I beg you to accept

¹ See "Florio," a poetical tale, which Miss Hannah More had recently published with the "Bas Bleu."—E.

² On the 11th, Hannah More paid him a visit. "I made poor Vesey," she says, "go with me on Saturday to see Mr. Walpole, who has had a

of an addition to your Strawberry editions; and believe me to be, with the greatest gratitude, your too much honoured and most obliged humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Sunday night, June 18, 1786.

I SUPPOSE you have been swearing at the east wind for parching your verdure, and are now weeping for the rain that drowns your hay. I have these calamities in common, and my constant and particular one,—people that come to see my house, which unfortunately is more in request than ever. Already I have had twenty-eight sets, have five more tickets given out; and yesterday, before I had dined, three German barons came. My house is a torment, not a comfort!

I was sent for again to dine at Gunnersbury on Friday, and was forced to send to town for a dress-coat and a sword. There were the Prince of Wales, the Prince of Mecklenburg, the Duke of Portland, Lord Clanbrassil, Lord and Lady Clermont, Lord and Lady Southampton, Lord Pelham, and Mrs. Howe. The Prince of Mecklenburg went back to Windsor after coffee; and the Prince and Lord and Lady Clermont to town after tea, to hear some new French players at Lady William Gordon's. The Princess, Lady Barrymore, and the rest of us, played three pools at commerce till ten. I am afraid I was tired and gaped. While we were at the dairy, the Princess insisted on my making some verses on Gunnersbury. I pleaded being superannuated. She would not excuse me. I promised she should have an ode on her

long illness. Notwithstanding his sufferings, I never found him so pleasant, so witty, and so entertaining. He said a thousand diverting things about 'Florio;' but accused me of having imposed on the world by a dedication full of falsehood; meaning the compliment to himself. I never knew a man suffer pain with such entire patience. This submission is certainly a most valuable part of religion; and yet, alas! he is not religious. I must, however, do him the justice to say, that, except the delight he has in teasing me for what he calls over-strictness, I never heard a sentence from him which savoured of infidelity." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 11.—E.

next birthday, which diverted the Prince; but all would not do. So, as I came home, I made the following stanzas, and sent them to her breakfast next morning:—

In deathless odes for ever green
Augustus' laurels blow;
Nor e'er was grateful duty seen
In warmer strains to flow.

Oh! why is Flaccus not alive,
Your favourite scene to sing?
To Gunnersbury's charms could give
His lyre immortal spring.

As warm as his my zeal for you,
Great princess! could I show it:
But though you have a Horace too—
Ah, Madam! he's no poet.

If they are but poor verses, consider I am sixty-nine, was half asleep, and made them almost extempore—and by command! However, they succeeded, and I received this gracious answer:—

“I wish I had a name that could answer your pretty verses. Your yawning yesterday opened your vein for pleasing me; and I return you my thanks, my good Mr. Walpole, and remain sincerely your friend,

“AMELIA.”

I think this is very genteel at seventy-five.

Do you know that I have bought the Jupiter Serapis as well as the Julio Clovio!¹ Mr. * * * * assures me he has seen six of the head, and not one of them so fine, or so well preserved. I am glad Sir Joshua Reynolds saw no more excellence in the Jupiter than in the Clovio; or the Duke of Portland, I suppose, would have purchased it, as he has the vase for a thousand pounds. I would not change. I told Sir William Hamilton and the late Duchess, when I never thought it would be mine, that I had rather have the head than the vase. I shall long for Mrs. Damer to make a bust to it, and then it

¹ At the sale of the Duchess-dowager of Portland.

will be still more valuable. I have deposited both the Illumination¹ and the Jupiter in Lady Di.'s cabinet,² which is worthy of them. And here my collection winds up; I will not purchase trumpery after such jewels. Besides, everything is much dearer in old age, as one has less time to enjoy. Good night!

TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, June 21, 1786.

ON coming to town yesterday upon business, I found, Sir, your very magnificent and most valuable present,³ for which I beg you will accept my most grateful thanks. I am impatient to return to Twickenham, to read it tranquilly. As yet I have only had time to turn the prints over, and to read the preface; but I see already that it is both a noble and laborious work, and will do great honour both to you and to your country. Yet one apprehension it has given me—I fear not living to see the second part! Yet I shall presume to keep it unbound; not only till it is perfectly dry and secure, but, as I mean the binding should be as fine as it deserves, I should be afraid of not having both volumes exactly alike.

Your partiality, I doubt, Sir, has induced you to insert a paper not so worthy of the public regard as the rest of your splendid performance. My letter to Mr. Cole,⁴ which I am sure I had utterly forgotten to have ever written, was a hasty indigested sketch, like the rest of my scribbings, and never calculated to lead such well-meditated and accurate works as yours. Having lived familiarly with Mr. Cole from our boyhood, I used to write to him carelessly on the occasions that occurred. As it was always on subjects of no importance, I never thought of enjoining secrecy. I could not foresee that

¹ The Book of Psalms, with twenty-one illuminations, by Don Julio Clovio, scholar of Julio Romano.—E.

² A cabinet at Strawberry Hill, built in 1776, to receive seven incomparable drawings of Lady Diana Beauclerc, for Walpole's tragedy of "The Mysterious Mother."—E.

³ The first volume of Mr. Gough's "Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain."—E.

⁴ See vol. v. p. 245.—E.

such idle communications would find a place in a great national work, or I should have been more attentive to what I said. Your taste, Sir, I fear, has for once been misled; and I shall be sorry for having innocently blemished a single page. Since your partiality (for such it certainly was) has gone so far, I flatter myself you will have retained enough to accept, not a retribution, but a trifling mark of my regard, in the little volume that accompanies this; in which you will find that another too favourable reader has bestowed on me more distinction than I could procure for myself, by turning my slight *Essay on Gardening*¹ into the pure French of the last age;² and, which is wonderful, has not debased Milton by French poetry: on the contrary, I think Milton has given a dignity to French poetry—nay, and harmony; both which I thought that language almost incapable of receiving. As I would wish to give all the value I can to my offering, I will mention, that I have printed but four hundred copies, half of which went to France; and as this is an age in which mere rarities are preferred to commoner things of intrinsic worth,—as I have found by the ridiculous prices given for some of my insignificant publications, merely because they are scarce,—I hope, under the title of a kind of curiosity, my thin piece will be admitted into your library. If you would indulge me so far, Sir, as to let me know when I might hope to see the second part, I would calculate how many more fits of the gout I may weather, and would be still more strict in my regimen. I hope, at least, that you will not wait for the engravers, but will accomplish the text for the sake of the world: in this I speak disinterestedly. Though you are much younger than I am, I would have your part of the work secure: engravers may always proceed, or be found; another author cannot.

¹ The author of "The Pursuits of Literature"—

"Well pleased to see

Walpole and Nature may, for once, agree,"

adds, in a note, "read (it well deserves the attention) that quaint, but most curious and learned, writer's excellent *Essay on Modern Gardening*."—E.

² Besides Walpole's *Essay on Modern Gardening*, the Duc de Nivernois translated Pope's *Essay on Man*, and a portion of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, into French verse.—E.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 29, 1786.

SINCE I received the honour of your lordship's last, I have been at Park-place for a few days. Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell and Mrs. Damer were there. We went on the Thames to see the new bridge at Henley, and Mrs. Damer's colossal masks. There is not a sight in the island more worthy of being visited. The bridge is as perfect as if bridges were natural productions, and as beautiful as if it had been built for Wentworth Castle; and the masks, as if the Romans had left them here. We saw them in a fortunate moment; for the rest of the time was very cold and uncomfortable, and the evenings as chill as many we have had lately. In short, I am come to think that the beginning of an old ditty, which passes for a collection of blunders, was really an old English pastoral, it is so descriptive of our climate:

“ Three children sliding on the ice
All on a summer's day——”

I have been overwhelmed more than ever by visitants to my house. Yesterday I had Count Oginski,¹ who was a pretender to the crown of Poland at the last election, and has been stripped of most of a vast estate. He had on a ring of the new King of Prussia, or I should have wished him joy on the death of one of the plunderers of his country.²

It has long been my opinion that the out-pensioners of Bedlam are so numerous, that the shortest and cheapest way would be to confine in Moorfields the few that remain in their senses, who would then be safe; and let the rest go at large. They are the out-pensioners who are for destroying poor dogs! The whole canine race never did half so much mischief as Lord George Gordon; nor even worry hares, but when hallooed on by men. As it is a persecution of

¹ Father of Count Michel Oginski, the associate of Kosciusko, and author of “*Memoires sur La Pologne et les Polonais, depuis 1788 jusqu'à la fin de 1815* ;” in four volumes octavo. Paris, 1826.—E.

² Frederick the Great had died on the 17th, at Berlin.—E.

animals, I do not love hunting; and what old writers mention as a commendation makes me hate it the more, its being an image of war. Mercy on us! that destruction of any species should be a sport or a merit! What cruel unreflecting imps we are! Everybody is unwilling to die; yet sacrifices the lives of others to momentary pastime, or to the still emptier vapour, fame! A hero or a sportsman who wishes for longer life is desirous of prolonging devastation. We shall be crammed, I suppose, with panegyrics and epitaphs on the King of Prussia; I am content that he can now have an epitaph. But, alas! the Emperor will write one for him probably in blood! and, while he shuts up convents for the sake of population, will be stuffing hospitals with maimed soldiers, besides making thousands of widows!

I have just been reading a new published history of the Colleges in Oxford, by Anthony Wood; and there found a feature in a character that always offended me, that of Archbishop Chicheley, who prompted Henry the Fifth to the invasion of France, to divert him from squeezing the overgrown clergy. When that priest meditated founding All Souls, and “consulted his friends (who seem to have been honest men) what great matter of piety he had best perform to God in his old age, he was advised by them to build an hospital for the wounded and sick soldiers that daily returned from the wars then had in France;”—I doubt his grace’s friends thought as I do of his artifice;—“but,” continues the historian, “disliking those motions, and valuing the welfare of the deceased more than the wounded and diseased, he resolved with himself to promote his design, which was, to have masses said for the King, Queen, and himself, &c. while living, and for their souls when dead.” And that mummery the old foolish rogue thought more efficacious than ointments and medicines for the wretches he had made! And of the chaplains and clerks he instituted in that dormitory, one was to teach grammar, and another prick-song. How history makes one shudder and laugh by turns! But I fear I have wearied your lordship with my idle declamation, and you will repent having commanded me to send you more letters.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1786.

I WAS sorry not to be apprised of your intention of going to town, where I would have met you; but I knew it too late, both as I was engaged, and as you was to return so soon. I mean to come to Park-place in a week or fortnight: but I should like to know what company you expect, or do not expect; for I had rather fill up your vacancies than be a supernumerary.

Lady Ossory has sent me two charades made by Colonel Fitzpatrick: the first she says is very easy, the second very difficult. I have not come within sight of the easy one; and, though I have a guess at the other, I do not believe I am right; and so I send them to you, who are master-general of the *Œdipuses*.

The first, that is so easy:—

“ In concert, song, or serenade,
My first requires my second’s aid.
To those residing near the pole
I would not recommend my whole.”

The two last lines, I conclude, neither connect with the two first, nor will help one to deciphering them.

The difficult one:—

“ Charades of all things are the worst,
But yet my best have been my first.
Who with my second are concern’d,
Will to despise my whole have learn’d.”

This sounds like a good one, and therefore I will not tell you my solution; for, if it is wrong, it might lead you astray; and if it is right, it would prove the charade is not a good one. Had I anything better, I would not send you charades, unless for the name of the author.

I have had a letter from your brother, who tells me that he

has his grandson Stewart¹ with him, who is a prodigy. I say to myself,

Prodigies are grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name.

I have seen prodigies in plenty of late, ay, and formerly too; but, divine as they have all been, each has had a mortal heel, and has trodden back a vast deal of their celestial path! I beg to be excused from any more credulity.

I am sorry you have lost your *fac-totum* Stokes. I suppose he had discovered that he was too necessary to you. Every day cures one of reliance on others; and we acquire a prodigious stock of experience, by the time that we shall cease to have occasion for any. Well! I am not clear but making or solving charades is as wise as anything we can do. I should pardon professed philosophers if they would allow that their wisdom is only trifling, instead of calling their trifling wisdom. Adieu!

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY CRAVEN.²

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1786.

To my extreme surprise, Madam, when I knew not in what quarter of the known or unknown world you was resident or existent, my maid in Berkeley-square sent me to Strawberry-hill a note from your ladyship, offering to call on

¹ Robert, eldest son of Robert Stewart, by Lady Sarah-Frances Seymour, second daughter of Francis, first Marquis of Hertford; afterwards so distinguished in the political world as Viscount Castlereagh. In 1821, he succeeded his father as second Marquis of Londonderry, and died at his seat at North Cray, in August 1822; at which time he was secretary of state for foreign affairs.—E.

² This celebrated lady was the daughter of Augustus, fourth Earl of Berkeley. In 1767, she was married to William, who, in 1769, succeeded his uncle as sixth Lord Craven: she had seven children by him; but, after a union of thirteen years, a separation taking place, she left England for France, and travelled in Italy, Austria, Poland, Russia, Turkey, and Greece. In 1789, she published her "Journey through the Crimea to England." Subsequently, she settled at Anspach, and, becoming a widow in September 1791, was united in the following month to the Margrave of Anspach; who, having sold his principality to the King of Prussia, settled in England; where he died in 1806. In 1825, the Margravine published her Memoirs. She died at Naples in 1828.—E.



J. P. Harding sculp.

1781

ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF CRAVEN.

FROM THE ORIGINAL BY G. Romney IN THE COLLECTION AT FLEWBY.

Printed by J. P. Harding.

me for a moment,—for a whirlwind, I suppose, was waiting at your door to carry you to Japan; and, as balloons have not yet settled any post-offices in the air, you could not, at least did not, give me any direction where to address you, though you did kindly reproach me with my silence. I must enter into a little justification before I proceed. I heard from you from Venice, then from Poland, and then, having whisked through Tartary, from Petersburg; but still with no directions. I said to myself, “I will write to Grand Cairo, which, probably, will be her next stage.” Nor was I totally in the wrong, for there came a letter from Constantinople, with a design mentioned of going to the Greek islands, and orders to write to you at Vienna; but with no banker or other address specified.

For a great while I had even stronger reasons than these for silence. For several months I was disabled by the gout from holding a pen; and you must know, Madam, that one can't write when one cannot write. Then, how write to *la Fiancée du Roi de Garbe*? You had been in the tent of the Cham of Tartary, and in the harem of the Captain Pacha, and, during your navigation of the Ægean, were possibly fallen into the terrible power of a corsair. How could I suppose that so many despotic infidels would part with your charms? I never expected you again on Christian ground. I did not doubt your having a talisman to make people in love with you; but anti-talismans are quite a new specific.

Well, while I was in this quandary, I received a delightful drawing of the Castle of Otranto; but still provokingly without any address. However, my gratitude for so very agreeable and obliging a present could not rest till I found you out. I wrote to the Duchess of Richmond, to beg she would ask your brother Captain Berkeley for a direction to you; and he has this very day been so good as to send me one, and I do not lose a moment in making use of it.

I give your ladyship a million of thanks for the drawing, which was really a very valuable gift to me. I did not even know that there was a Castle of Otranto. When the story

was finished, I looked into the map of the kingdom of Naples for a well-sounding name, and that of Otranto was very sonorous. Nay, but the drawing is so satisfactory, that there are two small windows, one over another, and looking into the country, that suit exactly to the small chambers from one of which Matilda heard the young peasant singing beneath her. Judge how welcome this must be to the author; and thence judge, Madam, how much you must have obliged him.

When you take another flight towards the bounds of the western ocean, remember to leave a direction. One cannot always shoot flying. Lord Chesterfield directed a letter to the late Lord Pembroke, who was always swimming, "To the Earl of Pembroke in the Thames, over against Whitehall." That was sure of finding him within a certain number of fathom; but your ladyship's longitude varies so rapidly, that one must be a good bowler indeed, to take one's ground so judiciously that by casting wide of the mark one may come in near to the jack.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1787.

Do not imagine, dear Madam, that I pretend in the most distant manner to pay you for charming poetry with insipid prose; much less that I acquit a debt of gratitude for flattering kindness and friendship, by a meagre tale that does not even aim at celebrating you. No; I have but two motives for offering you the accompanying trifle:¹ the first, to prove that the moment I have finished anything, *you* are of the earliest in my thoughts: the second, that, coming from my press, I wish it may be added to your Strawberry editions. It is so far from being designed for the public, that I have printed but forty copies; which I do not mention to raise its value, though it will with mere collectors, but lest you should lend it and lose it, when I may not be able to supply its place.

¹ Christine de Pise.

Christina, indeed, has some title to connection with you, both from her learning and her moral writings; as you are justly entitled to a lodging in her “*Cité des Dames*,” where I am sure her three patronesses would place you, as a favourite *élève* of some of their still more amiable sisters, who must at this moment be condoling with their unfortunate sister Gratitude, whose vagabond foundling has so basely disgraced her and herself. You fancied that Mrs. Yearsley was a spurious issue of a muse; and to be sure, with all their immortal virginity, the parish of Parnassus has been sadly charged with their bantlings; and, as nobody knows the fathers, no wonder some of the misses have turned out woful reprobates!

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY CRAVEN.

Berkéley Square, Jan. 2, 1787.

YOUR ladyship tells me, that you have kept a journal of your travels: you know not when your friends at Paris will give you time to put it *au net*; that is, I conclude and hope, prepare it for the press. I do not wonder that those friends, whether talismanic or others, are so assiduous, if you indulge them: but, unless they are of the former description, they are unpardonable, if they know what they interrupt; and deserve much more that you should wish they had fallen into a ditch, than the poor gentlemen who sigh more to see you in sheets of holland than of paper. To me the mischief is enormous. How proud I should be to register a noble authoress of my own country, who has travelled over more regions and farther than any female in print! Your ladyship has visited those islands and shores whence formerly issued those travelling sages and legislators who sought and imported wisdom, laws, and religion into Greece; and though we are so perfect as to want none of those commodities, the fame of those philosophers is certainly diminished when a fair lady has gone as far in quest of knowledge. You have gone in an age when travels are brought to a juster standard, by narrations being limited to truth.

Formerly the performers of the longest voyages destroyed half the merit of their expeditions by relating, not what they had, but had *not* seen; a sort of communication that they might have imparted without stirring a foot from home. Such exaggerations drew discredit on travels, till people would not believe that there existed in other countries anything very different from what they saw in their own; and because no Patagonians, or gentry seven or eight feet high, were really discovered, they would not believe that there were Laplanders or pigmies of three and four. Incredulity went so far, that at last it was doubted whether China so much as existed; and our countryman Sir John Mandeville¹ got an ill name, because, though he gave an account of it, he had not brought back its right name:² at least, if I do not mistake, this was the case; but it is long since I read anything about the matter, and I am willing to begin my travels again under your ladyship's auspices. I am sorry to hear, Madam, that by your account Lady Mary Wortley was not so accurate and faithful as modern travellers. The invaluable art of inoculation, which she brought from Constantinople, so dear to all admirers of beauty, and to which we owe, perhaps, the preservation of yours, stamps her an universal benefactress; and as you rival her in poetic talents, I had rather you would employ them to celebrate her for her nostrum, than detect her for romancing. However, genuine accounts of the interior of seraglios would be precious; and I was in hopes would become the greater rarities, as I flattered myself that your friends the Empress of Russia and the Emperor were determined to level Ottoman tyranny. His Imperial Majesty, who has demolished the prison-bars of so many nunneries, would perform a still more Christian act in setting free so many useless sultanas; and her Czarish Majesty, I trust, would be as great a benefactress to

¹ As an instance of the monstrous exaggerations of this ancient Munchausen, take the following:—"I am a liar if I have not seen in Java a single shell in which three men might completely hide themselves, and all white!" He also states himself to have met with whole nations of giants, twenty-five feet high; and of pigmies, as many inches.—E.

² In a conversation with Mr. Windham, Dr. Johnson, a few days before his death, "recommended, for an account of China, Sir John Mandeville's Travels." See Boswell's Johnson, vol. ix. p. 317, ed. 1835.—E.

our sex, by abolishing the barbarous practice that reduces us to be of none. Your ladyship's indefatigable peregrinations should have such great objects in view, when you have the ear of sovereigns.

Peter the Hermit conjured up the first crusadoes against the infidels by running about from monarch to monarch. Lady Craven should be as zealous and as renowned; and every fair Circassian would acknowledge, that one English lady had repaid their country for the secret which another had given to Europe from their practice.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 23, 1787.

DEAR MADAM,

I NOT only send you "*La Cité des Dames*," but Christina's *Life of Charles the Fifth*, which will entertain you more; and which, when I wrote my brief history of her, I did not know she had actually composed. Mr. Dutens told me of it very lately, and actually borrowed it for me; and but yesterday my French bookseller sent me three-and-twenty other volumes of those *Mémoires Historiques*¹ which I had ordered him to get for me, and which will keep my eyes to the oar for some time, whenever I have leisure to sail through such an ocean; and yet I shall embark with pleasure, late as it is for me to undertake such a hugeous voyage: but a crew of old gossips are no improper company, and we shall sit in a warm cabin, and hear and tell old stories of past times.

Pray keep the volume as long as you please, and borrow as many more as you please, for each volume is a detached piece. Yet I do not suppose your friends will allow you much time for reading in town; and I hope I shall often be the better for their hindering you.² Yours most sincerely.

¹ "Collection des meilleurs Ouvrages Français composés par des Femmes;" by Mademoiselle Keralio.

² Miss More, in a letter written a few days after, says—"Mr. Walpole is remarkably well: yesterday he sent me a very agreeable letter, with some very thick volumes of curious French *Mémoires*, desiring me,

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.¹

Berkeley Square, March 13, 1787.

It is very true, Sir, as Lord Strafford told you, that I have taken care that letters of living persons to me shall be restored to the writers when I die. I have burnt a great many, and, as you desire it, would do so by yours; but, having received a like intimation some time ago, I put yours into a separate paper, with a particular direction that they should be delivered to you: and, therefore, I imagine it will be more satisfaction to you, as it will be to me too, that you should receive them yourself; and therefore, if you please to let me know how I shall convey them, I will bring them from Strawberry-hill, where they are, the first time I go thither. I hope you enjoy your health, and I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.²

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1787.

IN your note, on going out of town, you desired me to remember you; but as I do not like the mere servile merit of obedience, I took time, my dear Madam, to try to forget you; and, having failed as to my wish, I have the free-born pleasure of thinking of you in spite of my teeth, and without any regard to your injunction. No queen upon earth, as fond as royal persons are of their prerogative, but would prefer being loved for herself rather than for her power; and I hope you have not more majesty

“Than the whole race of queens.”

Perhaps the spirit of your command did not mean that I should give you such manual proof of my remembrance; and you may not know what to make of a subject who avows a mutinous spirit, and at the same time exceeds the measure of

if I like them, to send for the other twenty-three volumes; a pretty light undertaking, in this mad town and this short life.” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 49.—E.

¹ Now first printed.

² Now first collected.

his duty. It is, I own, a kind of Irish loyalty; and, to keep up the Irish character, I will confess that I never was disposed to be so loyal to any sovereign that was not a subject. If you collect from all this galamatias that I am cordially your humble servant, I shall be content. The Irish have the best hearts in the three kingdoms, and they never blunder more than when they attempt to express their zeal and affection: the reason, I suppose, is, that cool sense never thinks of attempting impossibilities; but a warm heart feels itself ready to do more than is possible for those it loves. I am sure our poor friend in Clarges-street¹ would subscribe to this last sentence. What English heart ever excelled hers? I should almost have said equalled, if I were not writing to one that rivals her.

The last time I saw her before I left London, Miss Burney² passed the evening there, looking quite recovered and well, and so cheerful and agreeable, that the court seems only to have improved the ease of her manner, instead of stamping more reserve on it, as I feared: but what slight graces it can give, will not compensate to us and the world for the loss of her company and her writings. Not but that *some young ladies* who can write, can stifle their talent as much as if they were under lock and key in the royal library. I do not see but *a cottage* is as pernicious to genius as the Queen's waiting-room. Why should one *remember* people that forget themselves? Oh! I am sorry I used that expression, as it is commonly applied to such self-oblivion as Mrs. —; and light and darkness are not more opposite than the forgetful-

¹ In a letter to Walpole, written at this time from Cowslip Green, Miss More says—"When I sit in a little hermitage I have built in my garden,—not to be melancholy in, but to think upon my friends, and to read their works and letters,—Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself to my mind as the man of wit than as the tender-hearted and humane friend of my dear infirm, broken-spirited Mrs. Vesey. One only admires talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment, with which affection has commonly nothing to do; but one does more than admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes. My very heart is softened when I consider that she is now out of the way of your kind attentions, and I fear that nothing else on earth gives her the smallest pleasure." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 72.—E.

² This highly-gifted young lady had, in the preceding year, been appointed keeper of the robes to the Queen.—E.

ness to which I alluded, and hers. The former forgetfulness can forget its own powers and the injuries of others; the latter can forget its own defects, and the obligations and services it has received. How poor is that language which has not distinct terms for modesty and virtue, and for excess of vanity and ingratitude! The Arabic tongue, I suppose, has specific words for all the shades of oblivion, which, you see, has its extremes. I think I have heard that there are some score of different terms for a lion in Arabic, each expressive of a different quality; and consequently its generosity and its appetite for blood are not confounded in one general word. But if an Arabian vocabulary were as numerous in proportion for all the qualities that can enter into a human composition, it would be more difficult to be learned therein, than to master all the characters of the Chinese.

You did me the honour of asking me for my "Castle of Otranto," for your library at Cowslip Green. May I, as a printer, rather than as an author, beg leave to furnish part of a shelf there? and as I must fetch some of the books from Strawberry-hill, will you wait till I can send them all together? And will you be so good as to tell me whither I shall send them, or how direct and convey them to you at Bristol? I shall have a satisfaction in thinking that they will remain in your rising cottage (in which, I hope, you will enjoy a long series of happy hours); and that they will sometimes, when they and I shall be forgotten in other places, recall to Miss More's memory her very sincere humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 17, 1787.

I HAVE very little to tell you since we met but disappointments, and those of no great consequence. On Friday night Lady Pembroke wrote to me that Princess Lubomirski was to dine with her the next day, and desired to come in the morning to see Strawberry. Well, my castle put on its robes, breakfast was prepared, and I shoved another company out of

the house, who had a ticket for seeing it. The sun shone, my hay was cocked, we looked divinely; and at half an hour after two, nobody came but a servant from Lady Pembroke, to say her Polish altitude had sent her word she had another engagement in town that would keep her too late:—so Lady Pembroke's dinner was addled; and we had nothing to do, but, like good Christians, if we chose it, to compel everybody on the road, whether they chose it or not, to come in and eat our soup and biscuits. Methinks this *liberum veto* was rather impertinent, and I begin to think that the partition of Poland was very right.

Your brother has sent me a card for a ball on Monday, but I have excused myself. I have not yet compassed the whole circuit of my own garden, and I have had an inflammation in one of my eyes, and don't think I look as well as my house and my verdure; and had rather see my hay-cocks, than the Duchess of Polignac and Madame Lubomirski. "The Way to keep Him" had the way to get me, and I could crawl to it, because I had an inclination; but I have a great command of myself when I have no mind to do anything. Lady Constant was worth an hundred *acs* and *irskis*. Let me hear of you when you have nothing else to do; though I suppose you have as little to tell as you see I had.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1787.

SAINT SWITHIN is no friend to correspondence, my dear lord. There is not only a great sameness in his own proceedings, but he makes everybody else dull --- I mean in the country, where one frets at its raining every day and all day. In town he is no more minded than the proclamation against vice and immorality. Still, though he has all the honours of the quarantine, I believe it often rained for forty days long before St. Swithin was born, if ever born he was; and the proverb was coined and put under his patronage, because people observed that it frequently does rain for forty days

together at this season. I remember Lady Suffolk telling me, that Lord Dysart's great meadow had never been mowed but once in forty years without rain. I said, "All that that proved was, that rain was good for hay," as I am persuaded the climate of a country and its productions are suited to each other. Nay, rain is good for haymakers too, who get more employment the oftener the hay is made over again. I do not know who is the saint that presides over thunder; but he has made an unusual quantity in this chill summer, and done a great deal of serious mischief, though not a fiftieth part of what Lord George Gordon did seven years ago, and happily he is fled.

Our little part of the world has been quiet as usual. The Duke of Queensberry has given a sumptuous dinner to the Princesse de Lamballe¹—*et voilà tout*. I never saw her, not even in France. I have no particular *penchant* for sterling princes and princesses, much less for those of French plate.

The only entertaining thing I can tell your lordship from our district is, that old Madam French, who lives close by the bridge at Hampton-court, where, between her and the Thames, she had nothing but one grass-plot of the width of her house, has paved that whole plot with black and white marble in diamonds, exactly like the floor of a church; and this curious metamorphosis of a garden into a pavement has cost her three hundred and forty pounds:—a tarpaulin she might have had for some shillings, which would have looked as well, and might easily have been removed. To be sure, this exploit, and Lord Dudley's obelisk *below* a hedge, with his canal at right angles with the Thames, and a sham bridge no broader than that of a violin, and *parallel* to the river, are not preferable to the monsters in clipt yews of our ancestors;

¹ Sister to the Prince de Carignan, of the royal house of Sardinia, and wife of the Prince de Lamballe, only son to the Duc de Penthièvre. She was *sur-intendante de la maison de la Reine*, and, from her attachment to Marie Antoinette, was one of the first females who fell a victim to the fury of the French revolution. The peculiar circumstances of horror which attended her death, and the indignities offered to her remains, are in the memory of every one who has read the accounts of that heart-rending event.—E.

Bad taste expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.

On the contrary, Mrs. Walsingham is making her house at Ditton (now baptized Boyle-farm) very orthodox. Her daughter Miss Boyle,¹ who has real genius, has carved three tablets in marble with boys, designed by herself. Those sculptures are for a chimney-piece; and she is painting panels in grotesque for the library, with pilasters of glass in black and gold. Miss Crewe, who has taste too, has decorated a room for her mother's house at Richmond, which was Lady Margaret Compton's, in a very pretty manner. How much more amiable the old women of the next age will be, than most of those we remember, who used to tumble at once from gallantry to devout scandal and cards! and revenge on the young of their own sex the desertion of ours. Now they are ingenious, they will not want amusement. Adieu, my dear lord!

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 14, 1787.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I AM shocked for human nature at the repeated malevolence of this woman!² The rank soil of riches we are accustomed to see overrun with weeds and thistles; but who could expect that the kindest seeds sown on poverty and dire misfortunes should meet with nothing but a rock at bottom? Catherine de' Medici, suckled by popes and transplanted to a throne, seems more excusable. Thank heaven, Madam, for giving you so excellent a heart; ay, and so good a head. You are not only benevolence itself; but, with fifty times the genius of a Yearsley, you are void of vanity. How

¹ Afterwards married to Lord Henry Fitzgerald.

² Walpole had recently received a letter from Miss More, in which she had said—"My old friend the milk-woman has just brought out another book, to which she has prefixed my original preface to her first book, and twenty pages of the scurrility published against me in her second. To all this she has added the deed which I got drawn up by an eminent lawyer to secure her money in the funds, and which she asserts I made Mrs. Montagu sign without reading." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 80.—E.

strange, that vanity should expel gratitude! Does not the wretched woman owe her fame to you, as well as her affluence? I can testify your labours for both. Dame Yearsley reminds me of the Troubadours, those vagrants whom I used to admire till I knew their history; and who used to pour out trumpery verses, and flatter or abuse accordingly as they were housed and clothed, or dismissed to the next parish. Yet you did not set this person in the stocks, after procuring an annuity for her! I beg your pardon for renewing so disgusting a subject, and will never mention it again. You have better amusement; you love good works, a temper superior to revenge.¹

I have again seen our poor friend in Clarges-street: her faculties decay rapidly, and of course she suffers less. She has not an acquaintance in town; and yet told me the town was very full, and that she had had a good deal of company. Her health is re-established, and we must now be content that her mind is not restless. My pity now feels most for Mrs. Hancock,² whose patience is inexhaustible, though not insensible.

Mrs. Piozzi, I hear, has two volumes of Dr. Johnson's Letters ready for publication.³ Bruce is printing his Travels; which I suppose will prove that his narratives were fabulous,

¹ Mrs. Yearsley was a woman of strong masculine understanding, and of a powerful independent mind, which could not brook anything in the nature of dictation or interference. Whether she then was a widow, or separated from her husband, I know not; but, in 1793, she kept a book-seller and stationer's shop, under the name of Ann Yearsley, at Bristol Hot-wells, assisted by her son, and there all sorts of literary discussion used to take place daily amongst those who frequented it; and Mrs. Yearsley being somewhat free, both in her political and religious opinions, as well as not a little indignant at Mrs. More's attempt at holding a control over her proceedings, it is not matter of wonder, that a very unreasonable asperity should have been exhibited on both sides.—G.

² "What a blessing for Mrs. Vesey, that Mrs. Hancock is alive and well! I do venerate that woman beyond words; her faithful, quiet, patient attachment makes all showy qualities and shining talents appear little in my eyes. Such characters are what Mr. Burke calls 'the soft quiet green, on which the soul loves to rest!'" Hannah More's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 80.—E.

³ In speaking of these Letters, which appeared shortly after, Hannah More says—"They are such as ought to have been written, but ought not to have been printed: a few of them are very good: sometimes he

as he will scarce repeat them by the press. These, and two more volumes of Mr. Gibbon's History, are all the literary news I know. France seems sunk indeed in all respects. What stuff are their theatrical goods, their Richards, Ninas, and Tarares! But when their Figaro could run threescore nights, how despicable must their taste be grown!¹ I rejoice that their political intrigues are not more creditable. I do not dislike the French from the vulgar antipathy between neighbouring nations, but for their insolent and unfounded airs of superiority. In arms we have almost always outshone them: and till they have excelled Newton, and come near to Shakspeare, pre-eminence in genius must remain with us. I think they are most entitled to triumph over the Italians; as, with the most meagre and inharmonious of all languages, the French have made more of that poverty in tragedy and eloquence, than the Italians have done with the language the most capable of both. But I did not mean to send you a dissertation. I hope it will not be long before you remove to Hampton.—Yet why should I wish that? You will only be geographically nearer to London till February. Cannot you now and then sleep at the Adelphi on a visit to poor Vesey and your friends, and let one know if you do?

is moral, and sometimes he is kind. The imprudence of editors and executors is an additional reason why men of parts should be afraid to die. Burke said to me the other day, in allusion to the innumerable lives, anecdotes, remains, &c. of this great man, 'How many maggots have crawled out of that great body!'" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 101.—E.

¹ Mr. Walpole had never seen Figaro acted, nor had he been at Paris for many years before it appeared: he was not, therefore, aware of the bold, witty, and continued allusions of almost every scene and of almost every incident of that comedy, to the most popular topics and the most distinguished characters of the day. The freedom with which it treated arbitrary government and all its establishments, while they all yet continued in unwelcome force in France, and the moral conduct of each individual of the piece exactly suiting the no-morality of the audience, joined to the admirable manner in which it was acted, certainly must be allowed to have given it its greatest vogue. But even now, when most of these temporary advantages no longer exist, whoever was well acquainted with the manners, habits, and anecdotes of Paris at the time of the first appearance of Figaro, will always admire in it a combination of keen and pointed satire, easy wit, and laughable incident.—B.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 11, 1787.

FROM violent contrary winds,¹ and by your letter going to Strawberry Hill, whence I was come, I have but just received it, and perhaps shall only be able to answer it by snatches, being up to the chin in nephews and nieces.

I find you knew nothing of the pacification when you wrote. When I saw your letter, I hoped it would tell me you was coming back, as your island is as safe as if it was situated in the Pacific Ocean, or at least as islands there used to be, till Sir Joseph Banks chose to *put them up*. I sent you the good news on the very day before you wrote, though I imagined you would learn it by earlier intelligence. Well, I enjoy both your safety and your great success, which is enhanced by its being owing to your character and abilities. I hope the latter will be allowed to operate by those who have not quite so much of either.

I shall be wonderful glad to see little Master Stonehenge² at Park-place; it will look in character there: but your own bridge is so stupendous in comparison, that hereafter the latter will be thought to have been a work of the Romans. Dr. Stukeley will burst his cerements to offer misletoe in your temple; and Mason, on the contrary, will die of vexation and spite that he cannot have Caractacus acted on the spot. Peace to all such!

—— But were there one whose fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires,

he would immortalize you, for all you have been carrying on in Jersey, and for all you shall carry off. Inigo Jones, or Charlton,³ or somebody, I forget who, called Stonehenge “Chorea Gigantum:” this will be the chorea of the pigmies;

¹ Mr. Conway was at this time at his government in Jersey.

² Mr. Walpole thus calls the small Druidic temple discovered in Jersey, which the States of that island had presented to General Conway, to be transported to and erected at Park-place.

³ Dr. Walter Charlton published a dissertation on Stonehenge in 1663, entitled “Chorea Gigantum.” It was reprinted in 1715.—E.

and, as I forget too what is Latin for Lilliputians, I will make a bad pun, and say,

—— Portantur avari
Pygmalionis opes.——

Pygmalion is as well-sounding a name for such a monarch as Oberon. Pray do not disappoint me, but transport the cathedral¹ of your island to your domain on our *continent*. I figure unborn antiquaries making pilgrimages to visit your bridge, your daughter's bridge,² and the Druidic temple; and if I were not too old to have any imagination left, I would add a sequel to *Mi Li*.³ Adieu!

TO THOMAS BARRETT, ESQ.⁴

Berkeley Square, June 5, 1788.

I WISH I could charge myself with any merit, which I always wish to have towards you, dear Sir, in letting Mr. Matthew see Strawberry; but in truth he has so much merit and modesty and taste himself, that I gave him the ticket with pleasure, which it seldom happens to me to do; for most of those who go thither, go because it is the fashion, and because *a party* is a prevailing custom too; and my tranquillity is disturbed, because nobody likes to stay at home. If Mr. Matthew was really entertained I am glad; but Mr. Wyatt has made him too correct a Goth not to have seen all the imperfections and bad execution of my attempts; for neither Mr. Bentley nor my workmen had *studied* the science, and I was always too desultory and impatient to consider that I should please myself more by allowing time, than by hurrying my plans into execution before they were

¹ The Druidic temple.

² The key-stones of the centre arch of the bridge at Henley are ornamented with heads of the Thames and Isis, designed by the Hon. Mrs. Damer, and executed by her in Portland stone.

³ One of the Hieroglyphic tales, containing a description of Park-place. It will be found in Walpole's works.

⁴ Of Lee, in East Kent; whose seat was built by Mr. Wyatt, and greatly admired by Walpole.—E.

ripe. My house therefore is but a sketch by beginners, yours is finished by a great master; and if Mr. Matthew liked mine, it was *en virtuose*, who loves the dawnings of an art, or the glimmerings of its restoration.

I finished Mr. Gibbon a full fortnight ago, and was extremely pleased. It is a most wonderful mass of information, not only on history, but almost on all the ingredients of history, as war, government, commerce, coin, and what not. If it has a fault, it is in embracing too much, and consequently in not detailing enough, and in striding backwards and forwards from one set of princes to another, and from one subject to another; so that, without much historic knowledge, and without much memory, and much method in one's memory, it is almost impossible not to be sometimes bewildered: nay, his own impatience to tell what he knows, makes the author, though commonly so explicit, not perfectly clear in his expressions. The last chapter of the fourth volume, I own, made me recoil, and I could scarcely push through it. So far from being Catholic or heretic, I wished Mr. Gibbon had never heard of Monophysites, Nestorians, or any such fools! But the sixth volume made ample amends; Mahomet and the Popes were gentlemen and good company. I abominate fractions of theology and reformation.

Mr. Sheridan, I hear, did not quite satisfy the passionate expectation that had been raised;¹ but it was impossible he could, when people had worked themselves into an enthusiasm of offering fifty — ay, *fifty* guineas for a ticket to hear

¹ Of his speech in Westminster-hall, on bringing forward the Begum charge against Mr. Hastings; upon which Mr. Burke pronounced the high eulogium, that “all the various species of oratory that had been heard, either in ancient or modern times—whatever the acuteness of the bar, the dignity of the senate, or the morality of the pulpit could furnish—had not been equal to what the House had that day heard.” Gibbon, who was present, thus describes it, in a letter to Lord Sheffield:—“Yesterday the august scene was closed for this year. Sheridan surpassed himself; and, though I am far from considering him as a perfect orator, there were many beautiful passages in his speech—on justice, filial love, &c.; one of the closest chains of argument I ever heard, to prove that Hastings was responsible for the acts of Middleton; and a compliment, much admired, to a certain historian of your acquaintance. Sheridan, on the close of his speech, sunk into Burke's arms—a good actor: but I called this morning; he is perfectly well.”—E.

him. Well ! we are sunk and deplorable in many points, yet not absolutely gone, when history and eloquence throw out such shoots ! I thought I had outlived my country ; I am glad not to leave it desperate ! Adieu, dear Sir !

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, June 17, 1788.

I GUESS, my dear lord, and only guess, that you are arrived at Wentworth Castle. If you are not, my letter will lose none of its bloom by waiting for you ; for I have nothing fresh to tell you, and only write because you enjoined it. I settled in my Lilliputian towers but this morning. I wish people would come into the country on May-day, and fix in town the 1st of November. But as they will not, I have made up my mind ; and having so little time left, I prefer London, when my friends and society are in it, to living here alone, or with the weird sisters of Richmond and Hampton. I had additional reason now, for the streets are as green as the fields : we are burnt to the bone, and have not a lock of hay to cover our nakedness : oats are so dear, that I suppose they will soon be eaten at Brooks's and fashionable tables as a rarity. The drought has lasted so long, that for this fortnight I have been foretelling haymaking and winter, which June generally produces ; but to-day is sultry, and I am not a prophet worth a straw. Though not resident till now, I have flitted backwards and forwards, and last Friday came hither to look for a minute at a ball at Mrs. Walsingham's at Ditton ; which would have been very pretty, for she had stuck coloured lamps in the hair of all her trees and bushes, if the east wind had not danced a reel all the time by the side of the river.

Mr. Conway's play,¹ of which your lordship has seen some account in the papers, has succeeded delightfully, both in

¹ A comedy, called " False Appearances," translated from *L'Homme du Jour* of Boissy. It was first acted at the private theatre at Richmond-house, and afterwards at Drury-lane.—E.

representation and applause. The language is most genteel, though translated from verse; and both prologue and epilogue are charming. The former was delivered most justly and admirably by Lord Derby, and the latter with inimitable spirit and grace by Mrs. Damer. Mr. Merry and Mrs. Bruce played excellently too. But General Conway, Mrs. Damer, and everybody else are drowned by Mr. Sheridan, whose renown has engrossed all Fame's tongues and trumpets. Lord Townshend said he should be sorry were he forced to give a vote directly on Hastings, before he had time to cool; and one of the peers saying the speech had not made the same impression on him, the Marquis replied, a seal might be finely cut, and yet not be in fault for making a bad impression.

I have, you see, been forced to send your lordship what scraps I brought from town: the next four months, I doubt, will reduce me to my old sterility; for I cannot retail French gazettes, though as a good Englishman bound to hope they will contain a civil war. I care still less about the double imperial campaign, only hoping that the poor dear Turks will heartily beat both Emperor and Empress. If the first Ottomans could be punished, they deserved it, but the present possessors have as good a prescription on their side as any people in Europe. We ourselves are Saxons, Danes, Normans; our neighbours are Franks, not Gauls; who the rest are, Goths, Gepidæ, Heruli, Mr. Gibbon knows; and the Dutch usurped the estates of herrings, turbot, and other marine indigenæ. Still, though I do not wish the hair of a Turk's beard to be hurt, I do not say that it would not be amusing to have Constantinople taken, merely as a lusty event; for neither could I live to see Athens revive, nor have I much faith in two such bloody-minded vultures, cock and hen, as Catherine and Joseph, conquering for the benefit of humanity; nor does my Christianity admire the propagation of the Gospel by the mouth of cannon. What desolation of peasants and their families by the episodes of forage and quarters! Oh! I wish Catherine and Joseph were brought to Westminster-hall and worried by Sheridan! I hope, too, that

the poor Begums are alive to hear of his speech; it will be some comfort, though I doubt nobody thinks of restoring them a quarter of a lac!

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1788.

I AM soundly rejoiced, my dear Madam, that the present summer is more favourable to me than the last; and that, instead of not answering my letters in three months, you open the campaign first. May not I flatter myself that it is a symptom of your being in better health? I wish, however, you had told me so in positive words, and that all your complaints have left you. Welcome as is your letter, it would have been ten times more welcome bringing me that assurance; for don't think I forget how ill you was last winter. As letters, you say, now keep their coaches, I hope those from Bristol will call often at my door.¹ I promise you I will never be denied to them.

No botanist am I; nor wished to learn from *you*, of all the Muses, that *piping* has a new signification. I had rather that *you* handled an oaten pipe than a carnation one; yet setting layers, I own, is preferable to reading newspapers, one of the chronical maladies of this age. Everybody reads them, nay quotes them, though everybody knows they are stuffed with lies or blunders. How should it be otherwise? If any extraordinary event happens, who but must hear it before it descends through a coffee-house to the runner of a daily paper? They who are always wanting news, are wanting to hear they don't know what. A lower species, indeed, is that of the scribes you mention, who every night compose a journal for

¹ Miss More, in her last letter, had said—"Mail-coaches, which come to others, come not to me: letters and newspapers, now that they travel in coaches, like gentlemen and ladies, come not within ten miles of my hermitage: and while other fortunate provincials are studying the world and its ways, and are feasting upon elopements, divorces, and suicides, tricked out in all the elegancies of Mr. Topham's phraseology, I am obliged to be contented with village vices, petty iniquities, and vulgar sins." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 77.—E.

the satisfaction of such *illiterati*, and feed them with all the vices and misfortunes of every private family; nay, they now call it a *duty* to publish all those calamities which decency to wretched relations used in compassion to suppress, I mean self-murder in particular. Mr. ———'s was detailed at length; and to-day that of Lord ——— and ———. The pretence is, *in terrorem*, like the absurd stake and highway of our ancestors; as if there were a precautionary potion for madness, or the stigma of a newspaper were more dreadful than death. Daily journalists, to be sure, are most respectable magistrates! Yes, much like the cobblers that Cromwell made peers.

I do lament your not going to Mr. Conway's play: both the author and actors deserved such an auditor as you, and you deserved to hear them. However, I do not pity *good* people who out of virtue lose or miss any pleasures. Those pastimes fleet as fast as those of the wicked; but, when gone, you saints can sit down and feast on your self-denial, and drink bumpers of satisfaction to the health of your own merit. So truly I don't pity you.

You say you hear no news, yet you quote Mr. Topham;¹ therefore why should I tell you that the King is going to Cheltenham? or that the Baccelli lately danced at the Opera at Paris with a blue bandeau on her forehead, inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*² Now who can doubt but she is as pure as the Countess of Salisbury?³ Was not it ingenious? and was not the ambassador so to allow it? No doubt he took it for a compliment to his own knee.

¹ Major Topham was the proprietor of the fashionable morning paper entitled *The World*. "In this paper," says Mr. Gifford, in his preface to the *Baviad*, "were given the earliest specimens of those unqualified and audacious attacks on all private character, which the town first smiled at for their quaintness, then tolerated for their absurdity; and—now that other papers equally wicked and more intelligible, have ventured to imitate it—will have to lament to the last hour of British liberty." In 1791, Major Topham published the *Life of John Elwes the miser*; which Walpole considered one of the most amusing anecdotal books in the English language.—E.

² While the Duke of Dorset, who kept her, was ambassador at Paris.

³ The Countess of Salisbury, to the fall of whose garter has been attributed the foundation of the order of the Garter.

Well! would we committed nothing but follies! What do we not commit when the abolition of slavery hitches! Adieu!

Though Cato died, though Tully spoke,
Though Brutus dealt the godlike stroke,
Yet perish'd fated Rome.

You have written; and I fear that even if Mr. Sheridan speaks, trade, the modern religion, will predominate. Adieu!

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1788.

WON'T you repent having opened the correspondence, my dear Madam, when you find my letters come so thick upon you? In this instance, however, I am only to blame in part, for being too ready to take advice, for the sole reason for which advice ever is taken,—because it fell in with my inclination.

You said in your last that you feared you took up time of mine to the prejudice of the public; implying, I imagine, that I might employ it in composing. Waving both your compliment and my own vanity, I will speak very seriously to you on that subject, and with exact truth. My simple writings have had better fortune than they had any reason to expect; and I fairly believe, in a great degree, because gentlemen-writers, who do not write for interest, are treated with some civility if they do not write absolute nonsense. I think so, because I have not unfrequently known much better works than mine much more neglected, if the name, fortune, and situation of the authors were below mine. I wrote early, from youth, spirits, and vanity; and from both the last when the first no longer existed. I now shudder when I reflect on my own boldness; and with mortification, when I compare my own writings with those of any great authors. This is so true, that I question whether it would be possible for me to summon up courage to publish anything I have written, if I could recall time past, and should yet think as I think at present.

So much for what is over and out of my power. As to writing now, I have totally forsworn the profession, for two solid reasons. One I have already told you; and it is, that I know my own writings are trifling and of no depth. The other is, that, light and futile as they were, I am sensible they are better than I could compose now. I am aware of the decay of the middling parts I had, and others may be still more sensible of it. How do I know but I am superannuated? nobody will be so coarse as to tell me so; but if I published dotage, all the world would tell me so. And who but runs that risk who is an author after seventy? What happened to the greatest author of this age, and who certainly retained a very considerable portion of his abilities for ten years after my age? Voltaire, at eighty-four I think, went to Paris to receive the incense, in person, of his countrymen, and to be witness of their admiration of a tragedy he had written at that Methusalem age. Incense he did receive till it choked him; and at the exhibition of his play he was actually crowned with laurel in the box where he sat. But what became of his poor play? It died as soon as he did — was buried with him; and no mortal, I dare to say, has ever read a line of it since, it was so bad.¹

As I am neither by a thousandth part so great, nor a quarter so little, I will herewith send you a fragment that an accidental rencontre set me upon writing, and which I found so flat, that I would not finish it. Don't believe that I am either begging praise by the stale artifice of hoping to be contradicted; or that I think there is any occasion to make you discover my caducity. No; but the fragment contains a curiosity — English verses written by a French prince of the blood, and which at first I had a mind to add to my Royal and Noble Authors; but as he was not a royal author of ours,

¹ Madame du Deffand, in a letter to Walpole of the 8th of March 1778, says — “Voltaire se porte bien: il est uniquement occupé de sa tragédie d'Irène; on assure qu'on la jouera de demain en huit: si elle n'a pas de succès, il en mourra.” On the 18th, she again writes — “Le succès de la pièce a été très médiocre; il y eut cependant beaucoup de claquemens de mains, mais c'était plus Voltaire qui en était l'objet que la pièce.” He died in the May following.—E.

and as I could not please myself with an account of him, I shall revert to my old resolution of not exposing my pen's gray hairs.¹

Of one passage I must take notice; it is a little indirect sneer at our crowd of authoresses. My choosing to send this to *you* is a proof that I think you an author, that is, a classic. But in truth I am nauseated by the Madams Piozzi, &c. and the host of novel-writers in petticoats, who think they imitate what is inimitable, Evelina and Cecilia. Your candour I know will not agree with me, when I tell you I am not at all charmed with Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley piping to one another: but *you* I exhort, and would encourage to write; and flatter myself you will never be royally gagged and promoted to fold muslins, as has been lately wittily said on Miss Burney, in the list of five hundred living authors. *Your* writings promote virtues; and their increasing editions prove their worth and utility. If you question my sincerity, can you doubt my admiring you, when you have gratified my self-love so amply in your *Bas Bleu*? Still, as much as I love your writings, I respect yet more your heart and your goodness. You are so good, that I believe you would go to heaven, even though there were no Sunday, and only six *working* days in the week. Adieu, my best Madam!

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 2, 1788.

MATTER for a letter, alas! my dear lord, I have none; but *about* letters I have great news to tell your lordship, only may the goddess of post-offices grant it be true! A Miss Sayer, of Richmond, who is at Paris, writes to Mrs. Boscawen, that a Baron de la Garde (I am sorry there are so many *a*'s in the genealogy of my story,) has found in a *vieille*

¹ The French prince of the blood here spoken of, was Charles Duke of Orleans, who being taken prisoner at the battle of Azincourt, was brought to England, and detained here for twenty-five years. For a copy of the verses, see Walpole's works, vol. i. p. 564.—E.

armoire five hundred more letters of Madame de Sévigné, and that they will be printed, if the expense is not too great. I am in a taking lest they should not appear before I set out for the Elysian fields; for, though the writer is one of the first personages I should inquire after on my arrival, I question whether St. Peter has taste enough to know where she lodges. He is more likely to be acquainted with St. Catherine of Sienna and St. Undecimillia; and therefore I had rather see the letters themselves. It is true I have no small doubt of the authenticity of the legend; and nothing will persuade me of its truth so much as the non-appearance of the letters — a melancholy kind of conviction. But I vehemently suspect some new coinage, like the letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, Pope Ganganelli, and the Princess Palatine. I have lately been reading some fragments of letters of the Duchess of Orleans, which are certainly genuine, and contain some curious circumstances; for though she was a simple gossiping old gentlewoman, yet many little facts she could not help learning: and, to give her her due, she was ready to tell all she knew. To our late Queen she certainly did write often; and her Majesty, then only Princess, was full as ready to pay her in her own coin, and a pretty considerable treaty of commerce for the exchange of scandal was faithfully executed between them; insomuch that I remember to have heard forty years ago, that our gracious sovereign entrusted her Royal Highness of Orleans with an intrigue of one of her women of the bedchamber, Mrs. Selwyn to wit; and the good Duchess entrusted it to so many other dear friends, that at last it got into the Utrecht Gazette, and came over hither, to the signal edification of the court of Leicester-fields. This is an additional reason, besides the internal evidence, for my believing the letters genuine. This old dame was mother of the Regent; and when she died, somebody wrote on her tomb, *Cy gist l'Oisiveté*. This came over too; and nobody could expound it, till our then third Princess, Caroline, unravelled it, — Idleness is the mother of all vice.

I wish well enough to posterity to hope that dowager highnesses will imitate the practice, and write all the trifles that

occupy their royal brains; for the world so at least learns some true history, which their husbands never divulge, especially if they are privy to their own history, which their ministers keep from them as much as possible. I do not believe the present King of France knows much more of what he, or rather his Queen, is actually doing, than I do. I rather pity him; for I believe he means well, which is not a common article of my faith.

I shall go about the end of this week to Park-place, where I expect to find the Druidic temple from Jersey erected. How dull will the world be, if constant pilgrimages are not made thither! where, besides the delight of the scenes, that temple, the rude great arch, Lady Ailesbury's needle-works, and Mrs. Damer's Thame and Isis on Henley-bridge, with other of her sculptures, make it one of the most curious spots in the island, and unique. I want to have Mr. Conway's comedy acted there; and then the father, mother, and daughter would exhibit a theatre of arts as uncommon. How I regret that your lordship did not hear Mrs. Damer speak the epilogue!

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 14, 1788.

YOUR intelligence of the jubilees to be celebrated in Scotland in honour of the Revolution was welcome indeed. It is a favourable symptom of an age when its festivals are founded on good sense and liberality of sentiment, and not to perpetuate superstition and slavery. Your countrymen, Sir, have proved their good sense too in their choice of a poet. Your writings breathe the noble generous spirit congenial to the institution. Give me leave to say that it is very flattering to me to have the ode communicated to me; I will not say, to be consulted, for of that distinction I am not worthy: I am not a poet, and am sure I cannot improve your ideas, which you have expressed with propriety and clearness, the

¹ Now first collected.

necessary ingredients of an address to a populous meeting; for I doubt our numerous audiences are not arrived at Olympic taste enough to seize with enthusiasm the eccentric flights of Pindar. You have taken a more rational road to inspiration, by adhering to the genuine topics of the occasion; and you speak in so manly a style, that I do not believe a more competent judge could amend your poetry.

I will tell you how more than occasionally the mention of Pindar slipped into my pen. I have frequently, and even yesterday, wished that some attempt were made to ennoble our horse-races, particularly at Newmarket, by associating better arts with the courses; as, by contributing for odes, the best of which should be rewarded by medals. Our nobility would find their vanity gratified; for, as the pedigrees of their steeds would soon grow tiresome, their own genealogies would replace them; and, in the mean time, poetry and medals would be improved. Their lordships would have judgment enough to know if their horse (which should be the impression on one side) were not well executed; and, as I hold that there is no being more difficult to draw well than a horse, no bad artist could be employed. Such a beginning would lead farther; and the cup or plate for the prize might rise into beautiful vases. But this is a vision; and I may as well go to bed and dream of anything else.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 17, 1788.

DEAR MADAM,

In this great discovery of a new mine of Madame de Sévigné's letters, my faith, I confess, is not quite firm. Do people sell houses wholesale, without opening their cupboards? This age, too, deals so much in false coinage, that booksellers and Birmingham give equal vent to what is not sterling; with the only difference, that the shillings of the latter pretend that the names are effaced, while the wares of the former pass

¹ Now first collected.

under borrowed names. Have we not seen, besides all the *Testamens Politiques*, the spurious letters of *Ninon de l'Enclos*, of Pope Ganganelli, and the *Memoirs of the Princess Palatine*? This is a little mortifying, while we know that there actually exists at Naples a whole library of genuine Greek and Latin authors; most of whom, probably, have never been in print: and where it is not unnatural to suppose the works of some classics, yet lost, may be in being, and the remainder of some of the best. Yet, at the rate in which they proceed to unroll, it would take as many centuries to bring them to light, as have elapsed since they were overwhelmed. Nay, another eruption of *Vesuvius* may return all the volumes to chaos! *Omar* is stigmatized for burning the library of *Alexandria*. Is the King of Naples less a Turk? Is not it almost as unconscientious to keep a *seraglio* of virgin authors under the custody of nurses, as of blooming *Circassians*? Consider, my dear Madam, I am past seventy; or I should not be so ungallant as to make the smallest comparison between the contents of the two harems. Your picture, which hangs near my elbow, would frown, I am sure, if I had any light meaning.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 12, 1788.

MY late fit of gout, though very short, was a very authentic one, my dear lord, and the third I have had since Christmas. Still, of late years, I have suffered so little pain, that I can justly complain of nothing but the confinement, and the debility of my hands and feet, which, however, I can still use to a certain degree; and as I enjoy such good spirits and health in the intervals, I look upon the gout as no enemy; yet I know it is like the compacts said to be made with the devil, (no kind comparison to a friend!) who showers his favours on the contractors, but is sure to seize and carry them off at last.

I would not say so much of myself, but in return to your

lordship's obliging concern for me: yet, insignificant as the subject, I have no better in bank; and if I plume myself on the tolerable state of my outward man, I doubt your lordship finds that age does not treat my interior so mildly as the gout does the other. If my letters, as you are pleased to say, used to amuse you, you must perceive how insipid they are grown, both from my decays and from the little intercourse I have with the world. Nay, I take care not to aim at false vivacity: what do the attempts of age at liveliness prove but its weakness? What the Spectator said wittily, ought to be practised in sober sadness by old folks: when he was dull, he declared it was by design. So far, to be sure, we ought to observe it, as not to affect more spirits than we possess. To be purposely stupid, would be forbidding our correspondents to continue the intercourse; and I am so happy in enjoying the honour of your lordship's friendship, that I will be content (if you can be so) with my natural inanity, without studying to increase it.

I have been at Park-place, and assure your lordship that the Druidic temple vastly more than answers my expectation. Small it is, no doubt, when you are within the enclosure, and but a chapel of ease to Stonehenge; but Mr. Conway has placed it with so much judgment, that it has a lofty effect, and infinitely more than it could have had if he had yielded to Mrs. Damer's and my opinion, who earnestly begged to have it placed within the enclosure of the home-grounds. It now stands on the ridge of the high hill without, backed by the horizon, and with a grove on each side at a little distance; and, being exalted beyond and above the range of firs that climb up the sides of the hill from the valley, wears all the appearance of an ancient castle, whose towers are only shattered, not destroyed; and devout as I am to old castles, and small taste as I have for the ruins of ages absolutely barbarous, it is impossible not to be pleased with so very rare an antiquity so absolutely perfect, and it is difficult to prevent visionary ideas from improving a prospect.

If, as Lady Anne Conolly told your lordship, I have had a great deal of company, you must understand it of my house, not of me; for I have very little. Indeed, last Monday both

my house and I were included. The Duke of York sent me word the night before, that he would come and see it, and of course I had the honour of showing it myself. He said, and indeed it seemed so, that he was much pleased; at least, I had every reason to be satisfied; for I never saw any prince more gracious and obliging, nor heard one utter more personally kind speeches.

I do not find that *her grace* the Countess of Bristol's¹ will is really known yet. They talk of two wills — to be sure, in her double capacity; and they say she has made three co-heiresses to her jewels, the Empress of Russia, Lady Salisbury, and the whore of Babylon.² The first of those legatees, I am not sorry, is in a piteous scrape: I like the King of Sweden no better than I do her and the Emperor; but it is good that two destroyers should be punished by a third, and that two crocodiles should be gnawed by an insect. Thank God! *we* are not only at peace, but in full plenty — nay, and in full beauty too. Still better; though we have had rivers of rain, it has not, contrary to all precedent, washed away our warm weather. September, a month I generally dislike for its irresolute mixture of warm and cold, has hitherto been peremptorily fine. The apple and walnut-trees bend down with fruit, as in a poetic description of Paradise.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1788.

I DON'T like to defraud you of your compassion, my good friend, profuse as you are of it. I really suffered scarce any pain at all from my last fit of gout. I have known several persons who think there is a dignity in complaining; and, if you ask how they do, reply, "Why, I *am*—pretty well—to-day; but if you knew what I suffered *yesterday*!" Now me-

¹ The Duchess of Kingston, who died at Paris in August.—E.

² The newspapers had circulated a report, that the Duchess had bequeathed her diamonds to the Empress of Russia and his Holiness the Pope.—E.

thinks nobody has a right to tax another for pity on what is past; and besides, complaint of what is over can only make the hearer glad you are in pain no longer. Yes, yes, my dear Madam, you generally place your pity so profitably, that you shall not waste a drop upon me, who ought rather to be congratulated on being so well at my age.

Much less shall I allow you to make apologies for your admirable and proper conduct towards your poor *protégée*.¹ And now you have told me the behaviour of a certain great dame, I will confess to you that I have known it some months by accident — nay, and tried to repair it. I prevailed on Lady * * * * *, who as readily undertook the commission, and told the Countess of her treatment of you. Alas! the answer was, “It is too late; I have no money.” No! but she has, if she has a diamond left. I am indignant; yet, do you know, not at this duchess, or that countess, but at the invention of ranks, and titles, and pre-eminence. I used to hate that king and t’other prince; but, alas! on reflection I find the censure ought to fall on human nature in general. They are made of the same stuff as we, and dare we say what we should be in their situation? Poor creatures! think how they are educated, or rather corrupted, early, how flattered! To be educated properly, they should be led through hovels, and hospitals, and prisons. Instead of being reprimanded (and perhaps immediately after *sugar-plum’d*) for not learning their Latin or French grammar, they now and then should be kept fasting; and, if they cut their finger, should have no plaister till it festered. No part of a royal brat’s memory, which is good enough, should be burthened but with the remembrance of human sufferings. In short, I fear our nature is so liable to be corrupted and perverted by greatness, rank, power, and wealth, that I am inclined to think that virtue is the compensation to the poor for the want of riches: nay, I am disposed to believe that the first footpad or highwayman had been a man of quality, or a prince, who could not bear having wasted his fortune, and was too lazy to work; for a beggar-born would think labour a more na-

¹ Ann Yearsley. See *antè*, p. 286.—E.

tural way of getting a livelihood than venturing his life. I have something a similar opinion about common women. No modest girl thinks of many men, till she has been in love with *one*, been ruined by him, and abandoned. But to return to my theme, and it will fall heavy on yourself. Could the milkwoman have been so bad, if you had merely kept her from starving, instead of giving her opulence? The soil, I doubt, was bad; but it could not have produced the rank weed of ingratitude, if you had not dunged it with gold, which rises from rock, and seems to meet with a congenial bed when it falls on the human heart.

And so Dr. Warton imagines I am writing "Walpoliana!" No, in truth, nor anything else; nor shall — nor will I go out in a jest-book. Age has not only made me prudent, but, luckily, lazy; and, without the latter extinguisher, I do not know but that farthing candle my discretion would let my snuff of life flit to the last sparkle of folly, like what children call the parson and clerk in a bit of burnt paper. You see by my *writability* in pressing my letters on you, that my pen has still a colt's tooth left, but I never indulge the poor old child with more paper than this small-sized sheet; I do not give it enough to make a paper kite and fly abroad on wings of booksellers. *You* ought to continue writing, for you do good by your writings, or at least mean it; and if a virtuous intention fails, it is a sort of coin, which, though thrown away, still makes the donor worth more than he was before he gave it away. I delight too in the temperature of your piety, and that you would not see the enthusiastic exorcist. How shocking to suppose that the Omnipotent Creator of worlds delegates his power to a momentary insect to eject supernatural spirits that he had permitted to infest another insect, and had permitted to vomit blasphemies against himself! Pray do not call *that* enthusiasm, but delirium. I pity real enthusiasts, but I would shave their heads and take away some blood. The exorcist's associates are in a worse predicament, I doubt, and hope to *make* enthusiasts. If such abominable impostors were not rather a subject of indignation, I could smile at the rivalry between them and the animal magnetists, who are

inveigling fools into their different pales. And alas! while folly has a shilling left, there will be enthusiasts and quack doctors; and there will be slaves while there are kings or sugar-planters.¹ I have remarked, that though Jesuists, &c. travel to distant East and West to propagate their religion and traffic, I never heard of one that made a journey into Asia or Africa to preach the doctrines of liberty, though those regions are so deplorably oppressed. Nay, I much doubt whether ever any chaplain of the regiments we have sent to India has once whispered to a native of Bengal, that there are milder forms of government than those of his country. No; security of property is not a wholesome doctrine to be inculcated in a land where the soil produces diamonds and gold! In short, if your Bristol exorcist believes he can cast out devils, why does he not go to Leadenhall-street? There is a company whose name is legion.

By your *gambols*, as you call them, after the most ungamboling peeress in Christendom, and by your jaunts, I conclude, to my great satisfaction, that you are quite well. Change of scene and air are good for your spirits; and September, like all our old ladies, has given itself May airs, and must have made your journey very pleasant. Yet you will be glad to get back to your Cowslip-green, though it may offer you nothing but Michaelmas daisies. When you do leave it, I wish you could persuade Mrs. Garrick to settle sooner in London. There is full as good hay to be made in town at Christmas as at Hampton, and some hay-makers that will wish for you particularly. Your most sincere friend.

¹ In the letter to which this is a reply, Miss More had said—"In vain do we boast of the enlightened eighteenth century, and conceitedly talk as if human reason had not a manacle left about her, but that philosophy had broken down all the strongholds of prejudice, ignorance, and superstition; and yet at this very time Mesmer has got an hundred thousand pounds by animal magnetism in Paris, and Mainanduc is getting as much in London. There is a fortune-teller in Westminster who is making little less. Lavater's Physiognomy-books sell at fifteen guineas a set. The divining-rod is still considered as oracular in many places. Devils are cast out by seven ministers; and, to complete the disgraceful catalogue, slavery is vindicated in print, and defended in the House of Peers." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 120.—E.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY CRAVEN.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1788.

IT is agreeable to your ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter; and I may say, to your equity too, after I had proved to Monsieur Mercier, by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine, but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago. Not, Madam, that I could wonder if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man; who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages persons of not near your ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion that few persons know *when* to die; I am not so English as to mean when to dispatch themselves — no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure; and, consequently, it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we cyphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is addressed. My opinion, then, is, that when any personage has shone as much as is possible in his or her best walk, (and, not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two,) he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after Alzire, Mahomet, and Semiramis, and not have produced his wretched last pieces: Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war: and how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame by writing and reading pitiful poems; and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy! We have another example in Mr. Anstey; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head, the moment he had published the *first* edition of the Bath Guide; for, even in the second,

he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written anything tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old hacked simile of Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We have just received the works of an author, from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His Memoirs, I am told, are almost wholly military; which, therefore, I shall not read: and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should not understand it. What I saw of it formerly, convinced me that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and, though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language: and I can easily believe that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor,) is more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren, and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical; but, to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter, and softer, and more copious, than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced; which is the case wherever the mute *e* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board? Nay, will you believe me, Madam,—yes, you will, for you may convince your own eyes,—that a scene of *Zaire* begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath? *Enfin, donc, desormais*, are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc*, need I tell your ladyship, that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late King of Prussia?

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I

excommunicate a tongue in which your ladyship has condescended to write;¹ but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of which I thought it alike incapable, till I read Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, Madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope, when you tell me you shall return to England some time or other. Where will that time be for me? and when it arrives, shall I not be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must before this time have heard of the dismal state into which our chief personage is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two Houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum; and *the obvious one*, no doubt, will be fixed on.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.²

February 2, 17—71³ [1789.]

I AM sorry, in the sense of that word before it meant, like a Hebrew word, glad or sorry, that I am engaged this even-

¹ Besides writing a comedy in French, called "Nourjahad," Lady Craven had translated into that language Cibber's play of "She would and She would not."—E.

² This is the first of the series of letters addressed by Mr. Walpole to Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry, and now first published from the originals in their possession. See ADVERTISEMENT prefixed to the present volume.—E.

³ The date is thus put, alluding to his age, which, in 1789, was seventy-one.—M. B.

ing; and I am at your command on Tuesday, as it is always my inclination to be. It is a misfortune that words are become so much the current coin of society, that, like King William's shillings, they have no impression left; they are so smooth, that they mark no more to whom they first belonged than to whom they do belong, and are not worth even the twelpence into which they may be changed: but if they mean too little, they may seem to mean too much too, especially when an old man (who is often synonymous for a miser) parts with them. I am afraid of protesting how much I delight in your society, lest I should seem to affect being gallant; but if two negatives make an affirmative, why may not two ridicules compose one piece of sense? and therefore, as I am in love with you both, I trust it is a proof of the good sense of your devoted,

H. WALPOLE.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, March 20, 1789.

MRS. DAMER had lent her *Madame de la Motte*,¹ and I have but this moment recovered it; so, you see, I had not forgotten it any more than my engagements to you: nay, were it not ridiculous at my age to use a term so almost run out as *never*, I would add, that you will find I *never* can forget you.

I hope you are not engaged this day sevensnight, but will allow me to wait on you to Lady Ailesbury, which I will settle with her when I have your answer. I did mention it to her in general, but have no day free before Friday next, except Thursday; when, if there is another illumination, as is threatened, we should neither get thither nor thence; especially not the latter, if the former is impracticable.

“*Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi.*”²

P.S. I have got a few hairs of Edward the Fourth's *head*, not *beard*; they are of a darkish brown, not auburn.

¹ The *Mémoire Justificatif* of *Madame de la Motte*, relative to her conduct in the far-famed affair of the necklace.—E.

² Alluding to the public rejoicings on the recovery of George the Third from his first illness in 1788. In a letter to her sister, of the 9th

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, April 22, 1789.

DEAR MADAM,

As perhaps you have not yet seen the "Botanic Garden" (which I believe I mentioned to you), I lend it you to read. The poetry, I think, you will allow most admirable; and difficult it was, no doubt. If you are not a naturalist, as well as a poetess, perhaps you will lament that so powerful a talent has been wasted to so little purpose; for where is the use of describing in verse what nobody can understand without a long prosaic explanation of every article? It is still more unfortunate that there is not a symptom of plan in the whole poem. The lady-flowers and their lovers enter in pairs or trios, or &c. as often as the couples in Cassandra, and you are not a whit more interested about one heroine and her swain than about another. The similes are beautiful, fine, and sometimes sublime: and thus the episodes will be better remembered than the mass of the poem itself, which one cannot call *the subject*; for could one call it a subject, if anybody had composed a poem on the matches formerly made in the Fleet, where, as Waitwell says, in "The Way of the World," they stood like couples in rows ready to begin

of March, Miss More relates the following particulars:—"A day or two ago I dined at the Bishop of London's with Dr. Willis. As we had nobody else at dinner but the Master of the Rolls, I was indulged in asking the Doctor all manner of impertinent questions. He never saw, he said, so much natural sweetness and goodness of mind, united to so much piety, as in the King. During his illness, he many times shed tears for Lord North's blindness. The Bishop had been to him that morning: he told him, that he wished to return his thanks to Almighty God in the most public manner, and hoped the Bishop would not refuse him a sermon. He proposed going to St. Paul's to do it. He himself has named one of the Psalms for the thanksgiving-day, and the twelfth of Isaiah for the lesson." On the 17th, she again writes—"The Queen and Princesses came to see the illuminations, and did not get back to Kew till after one o'clock. When the coach stopped, the Queen took notice of a fine gentleman who came to the coach-door without his hat. This was the King, who came to hand her out. She scolded him for being up and out so late; but he gallantly replied, 'he could not possibly go to bed and sleep till he knew she was safe.' There never was so joyous, so innocent, and so orderly a mob." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 144-155.—E.

a country-dance? Still, I flatter myself, you will agree with me that the author is a great poet, and could raise the passions, and possesses all the requisites of the art. I found but a single bad verse: in the last canto one line ends *e'er long*. You will perhaps be surprised at meeting a truffle converted into a nymph, and inhabiting a palace studded with emeralds and rubies like a saloon in the Arabian Nights! I had a more particular motive for sending this poem to *you*: you will find the bard espousing your poor Africans. There is besides, which will please you too, a handsome panegyric on the apostle of humanity, Mr. Howard.¹

Mrs. Garrick, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in her own box at Mr. Conway's play, gave me a much better account of your health, which delighted me. I am sure, my good friend, you partake of my joy at the great success of his comedy. The additional character of the Abbé pleased much: it was added by the advice of the players to enliven it; that is, to stretch the jaws of the pit and galleries. I sighed silently; for it was originally so genteel and of a piece, that I was sorry to have it tumbled by coarse applauses. But this is a secret. I am going to Twickenham for two days on an assignation with the spring, and to avoid the riotous devotion of to-morrow.

A gentleman essayist has printed what he calls some strictures on my Royal and Noble Authors, in revenge for my having spoken irreverently (on Bishop Burnet's authority) of the Earl of Anglesey, who had the honour, it seems, of being the gentleman's grandfather. He asks me, by the

¹ "I did not feel," says Miss More, in her reply, "so much gratified in reading the poem, marvellous as I think it, as I did at the kindness which led you to think of me when you met with anything which you imagined would give me pleasure. Your strictures, which are as true as if they had no wit in them, served to embellish every page as I went on, and were more intelligible and delightful to me than the scientific annotations in the margin. The author is, indeed, a poet; and I wish, with you, that he had devoted his exuberant fancy, his opulence of imagery, and his correct and melodious versification, to subjects more congenial to human feelings than the intrigues of a flower-garden. I feel, like the most passionate lover, the beauty of the cyclamen, or honeysuckle; but am as indifferent as the most fashionable husband to their amours, their pleasures, or their unhappiness." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 149.—E.

way, why it was more ridiculous in the Duke of Newcastle to write his two comedies, than in the Duke of Buckingham to write "The Rehearsal"? Alas! I know but one reason; which is, that it is less ridiculous to write one excellent comedy, than two very bad ones. Peace be with such answerers! Adieu, my dear Madam! Yours most cordially.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

April 28, at night, 1789.

By my not saying *no* to Thursday, you, I trust, understood that I meant *yes*; and so I do. In the mean time, I send you the most delicious poem upon earth. If you don't know what it is all about, or why; at least you will find glorious similes about everything in the world, and I defy you to discover three bad verses in the whole stack. Dryden was but the prototype of *the Botanic Garden* in his charming Flower and Leaf; and if he had less meaning, it is true he had more plan: and I must own, that his white velvets and green velvets, and rubies and emeralds, were much more virtuous gentlefolks than most of the flowers of the creation, who seem to have no fear of Doctors' Commons before their eyes. This is only the Second Part; for, like my king's eldest daughter in the Hieroglyphic Tales, the First Part is not born yet:—no matter. I can read this over and over again for ever; for though it is so excellent, it is impossible to remember anything so disjointed, except you consider it as a collection of short enchanting poems,—as the Circe at her tremendous devilries in a church; the intrigue of the dear nightingale and rose; and the description of Medea; the episode of Mr. Howard, which ends with the most sublime of lines—in short, all, all; all is the most lovely poetry. And then one sighs, that such profusion of poetry, magnificent and tender, should be thrown away on what neither interests nor instructs, and, with all the pains the notes take to explain, is scarce intelligible.¹

¹ "Modern ears," says Mr. Mathias, in the Pursuits of Literature, "are absolutely debauched by such poetry as Dr. Darwin's, which marks

How strange it is, that a man should have been inspired with such enthusiasm of poetry by poring through a microscope, and peeping through the key-holes of all the seraglios of all the flowers in the universe ! I hope his discoveries may leave any impression but of the universal polygamy going on in the vegetable world, where, however, it is more gallant than amongst the human race; for you will find that they are the botanic ladies who keep harems, and not the gentlemen. Still, *I* will maintain that it is much better that we should have two wives than your sex two husbands. So pray don't mind Linnæus and Dr. Darwin: Dr. Madan had ten times more sense. Adieu ! Your doubly constant,

TELYPTHORUS.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, June 23, 1789.

I AM not a little disappointed and mortified at the post bringing me no letter from you to-day; you promised to write on the road. I reckon you arrived at your station on Sunday evening: if you do not write till next day, I shall have no letter till Thursday !

I am not at all consoled for my double loss: my only comfort is, that I flatter myself the journey and air will be of service to you both. The latter has been of use to me, though the part of the element of air has been chiefly acted by the element of water, as my poor haycocks feel ! Tonton¹ does not miss you so much as I do, not having so good a taste; for he is grown very fond of *me*, and I return it for your sakes, though

the decline of simplicity and true taste in this country. It is to England what Seneca's prose was to Rome: abundat dulcibus vitiis. Dryden and Pope are the standards of excellence in this species of writing in our language; and when young minds are rightly instituted in their works, they may, without much danger, read such glittering verses as Dr. Darwin's. They will then perceive the distortion of the sentiment, and the harlotry of the ornaments." To the short-lived popularity of Dr. Darwin, the admirable poem of "The Loves of the Triangles," the joint production of Mr. Canning and Mr. Frere, in no small degree contributed.—E.

¹ A dog of Miss Berry's, left in Walpole's care during their absence in Yorkshire.—M. B.

he deserves it too, for he is perfectly good-natured and tractable; but he is not beautiful, like his "god-dog," as Mr. Selwyn, who dined here on Saturday, called my poor late favourite;¹ especially as I have had him clipped. The shearing has brought to light a nose an ell long; and, as he has now *nasum rhinocerotis*, I do not doubt but he will be a better critic in poetry than Dr. Johnson, who judged of harmony by the principles of an author, and fancied, or wished to make others believe, that no Jacobite could write bad verses, nor a Whig good.

Have you shed a tear over the Opera-house?² or do you agree with me, that there is no occasion to rebuild it? The nation has long been tired of operas, and has now a good opportunity of dropping them. Dancing protracted their existence for some time; but *the room after* was the real support of both, and was like what has been said of your sex, that they never speak their true meaning but in the postscript of their letters. Would not it be sufficient to build an after-room on the whole *emplacement*, to which people might resort from all assemblies? It should be a codicil to all the diversions of London; and the greater the concourse, the more excuse there would be for staying all night, from the impossibility of ladies getting their coaches to drive up. To be crowded to death in a waiting-room, at the end of an entertainment, is the whole joy; for who goes to any diversion till the last minute of it? I am persuaded that, instead of retrenching St. Athanasius's Creed, as the Duke of Grafton proposed, in order to draw *good company* to church, it would be more efficacious if the congregation were to be indulged with an After-room in the vestry; and, instead of two or three being gathered together, there would be all the world, before the prayers would be quite over.

¹ The dog which had been bequeathed to Mr. Walpole by Madame du Deffand at her death, and which was likewise called Tonton. See *antè*, p. 120.—M.B.

² On the night of the 17th, the Opera-house was entirely consumed by fire.—E.

Thursday night.

“ Despairing, beside a clear stream
A shepherd forsaken was laid ; ”—

not very close to the stream, but within doors in sight of it; for in this damp weather a lame old Colin cannot lie and despair with any comfort on a wet bank : but I smile against the grain, and am seriously alarmed at Thursday being come, and no letter ! I dread one of you being ill. Mr. Batt¹ and the Abbé Nicholls² dined with me to-day, and I could talk of you *en pais de connoissance*. They tried to persuade me that I have no cause to be in a fright about you ; but I have such perfect faith in the kindness of both of you, as I have in your possessing every other virtue, that I cannot believe but some sinister accident must have prevented my hearing from you. I wish Friday was come ! I cannot write about anything else till I have a letter.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1789.

MADAM HANNAH,

You are an errant reprobate, and grow wickeder and wickeder every day. You deserve to be treated like a *negre* ; and your favourite Sunday, to which you are so partial that you treat the other poor six days of the week as if they had no souls to be saved, should, if I could have my will, “ shine

¹ Thomas Batt, Esq. then one of the commissioners for public accounts.—E.

² The Rev. Norton Nicholls, rector of Lound and Bradwell, in the county of Suffolk ; one of the most elegant scholars and accomplished gentlemen of the day. He died in November 1809, in his sixty-eighth year. “ It was his singular good fortune,” says Mr. Dawson Turner, “ to have been distinguished in his early life by the friendship of Gray the poet ; while the close of his days was cheered and enlivened and dignified by the friendship, and almost constant society, of a man scarcely inferior to Gray in talent and acquirements, Mr. Mathias ; who has embalmed his memory in an Italian Ode and a biographical memoir ; which latter is a beautiful specimen of that kind of composition.” They will both be found in the fifth volume of Nichols’s *Illustrations of Literature*.—E.

no Sabbath-day for you." Now, don't simper, and look as innocent as if virtue would not melt in your mouth. Can you deny the following charges?—I lent you "The Botanic Garden," and you returned it without writing a syllable, or saying where you were or whither you was going; I suppose for fear I should know how to direct to you. Why, if I did send a letter after you, could not you keep it three months without an answer, as you did last year?

In the next place, you and your *nine* accomplices, who, by the way, are too good in keeping you company, have clubbed the prettiest poem imaginable,¹ and communicated it to Mrs. Boscawen, with injunctions not to give a copy of it; I suppose, because you are ashamed of having written a panegyric. Whenever you *do* compose a satire, you are ready enough to publish it; at least, whenever you do, you will din one to death with it. But now, mind your perverseness: that very pretty novel poem, and I must own it is charming, have you gone and spoiled, flying in the faces of your best friends the Muses, and keeping no *measures* with them. I'll be shot if they dictated two of the best lines with two syllables too much in each—nay, you have weakened one of them,

" Ev'n Gardiner's mind "

is far more expressive than *steadfast* Gardiner's; and, as Mrs. Boscawen says, whoever knows anything of Gardiner, could not want that superfluous epithet; and whoever does not, would not be the wiser for your foolish insertion—Mrs. Boscawen did not call it foolish, but I do. The second line, as Mesdemoiselles the Muses handed it to you, Miss, was,

¹ " Bishop Bonner's Ghost ;" to which was prefixed the following argument:—" In the garden of the palace at Fulham is a dark recess; at the end of this stands a chair which once belonged to Bishop Bonner. A certain Bishop of London, more than two hundred years after the death of the aforesaid Bonner, just as the clock of the Gothic chapel had struck six, undertook to cut with his own hand a narrow walk through this thicket, which is since called 'The Monk's Walk.' He had no sooner begun to clear the way, than lo! suddenly up started from the chair the Ghost of Bonner; who, in a tone of just and bitter indignation, uttered the following verses."—E.

“ Have all be free and saved—”

not, “ All be free and all be saved :” the second *all be* is a most unnecessary tautology. The poem was perfect and faultless, if you could have let it alone. I wonder how your mischievous flippancy could help maiming that most new and beautiful expression, “sponge of sins;” I should not have been surprised, as you love verses too full of feet, if you had changed it to “that scrubbing-brush of sins.”

Well ! I will say no more now : but if you do not order me a copy of “Bonner’s Ghost” incontinently, never dare to look my printing-house in the face again. Or come, I’ll tell you what ; I will forgive all your enormities, if you will let me print your poem. I like to filch a little immortality out of others, and the Strawberry press could never have a better opportunity. I will not haggle for the public ; I will be content with printing only two hundred copies, of which you shall have half, and I half. It shall cost you nothing but a yes. I only propose this, in case you do not mean to print it yourself. Tell me sincerely which you like. But as to not printing it at all, charming and unexceptionable as it is, you cannot be so preposterous.¹

I by no means have a thought of detracting from your own share in your own poem ; but, as I do suspect that it caught some inspiration from your perusal of “The Botanic Garden,” so I hope you will discover that *my* style is much improved by having lately studied Bruce’s travels. There I dipped, and not in St. Giles’s pound, where one would think this author had been educated. Adieu ! Your friend, or mortal foe, as you behave on the present occasion.

¹ Miss More, in her reply, says—“ I send this under cover to the Bishop of London, to whom I write your emendations, and desire they may be considered as the true reading. What is odd enough, I did write both the lines so at first, but must go a-tinkering them afterwards. I do not pretend that I am not flattered by your obliging proposal of printing these slight verses at the Strawberry press. You must do as you please, I believe. What business have I to think meanly of verses you have commended ?” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 159.—E.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1789.

WERE there any such thing as sympathy at the distance of two hundred miles, you would have been in a mightier panic than I was; for, on Saturday se'nnight, going to open the glass case in the Tribune, my foot caught in the carpet, and I fell with my whole weight (*si* weight *y a*) against the corner of the marble altar, on my side, and bruised the muscles so badly, that for two days I could not move without screaming.¹ I am convinced I should have broken a rib, but that I fell on the cavity whence two of my ribs were removed, that are gone to Yorkshire. I am much better both of my bruise and of my lameness, and shall be ready to dance at my own wedding when my wives return. And now to answer your letter.

If you grow tired of the Arabian Nights, you have no more taste than Bishop Atterbury,² who huffed Pope for sending him them or the Persian Tales, and fancied he liked Virgil better, who had no more imagination than Dr. Akenside. Read Sinbad the Sailor's Voyages, and you will be sick of Æneas's. What woful invention were the nasty poultry that dunged on his dinner, and ships on fire turned into Nereids!

¹ Miss More, in a letter written at this time to Walpole says, "How you do scold me! but I don't care for your scolding; and I don't care for your wit neither, that I don't, half as much as I care for a blow which I hear you have given yourself against a table. I have known such very serious consequences arise from such accidents, that I beg of you to drown yourself in the "Véritable Arquebusade." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 158.—E.

² The following are the Bishop's expressions:—"And now, Sir, for your Arabian Tales. Ill as I have been, almost ever since they came to hand, I have read as much of them as ever I shall read while I live. Indeed, they do not please my taste; they are writ with so romantic an air, and are of so wild and absurd a contrivance, that I have not only no pleasure, but no patience in reading them. I cannot help thinking them the production of some woman's imagination." The Honourable Charles Yorke, in a letter to his brother, the second Earl of Hardwicke, written in June 1740, states that Pope and Warburton both agreed in condemning the Bishop's judgment on the Arabian Tales, and that Warburton added, that from those tales the completest notion might be gathered of the Eastern ceremonies and manners.—E.

a barn metamorphosed into a cascade in a pantomime is full as sublime an effort of genius. I do not know whether the Arabian Nights are of Oriental origin or not:¹ I should think not, because I never saw any other Oriental composition that was not bombast without genius, and figurative without nature; like an Indian screen, where you see little men on the foreground, and larger men hunting tigers above in the air, which they take for perspective. I do not think the Sultanness's narratives very natural or very probable, but there is a wildness in them that captivates. However, if you could wade through two octavos² of Dame Piozzi's *though's* and *so's* and *I trow's*, and cannot listen to seven volumes of Scheherezade's narrations, I will sue for a divorce *in foro Parnassi*, and Boccalini shall be my proctor. The cause will be a counterpart to the sentence of the Lacedæmonian, who was condemned for breach of the peace, by saying in three words what he might have said in two.

You are not the first Eurydice that has sent her husband to the devil, as you have kindly proposed to me; but I will not undertake the jaunt, for if old Nicholas Pluto should enjoin me not to look back to you, I should certainly forget the prohibition like my predecessor. Besides, I am a little too close to take a voyage twice which I am so soon to repeat; and should be laughed at by the good folks on the other side of the water, if I proposed coming back for a twinkling only. No; I choose as long as I can

“Still with my fav'rite Berrys to remain.”³

So, you was not quite satisfied, though you ought to have been transported, with King's College Chapel, because it has

¹ The work entitled “Mille et Une Nuits,” was translated from an original Arabic manuscript, in the King of France's library, by M. Galland, professor of Arabic in the University of Paris. It appeared in 1704-8, in twelve volumes.—E.

² Her “Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany,” honoured with a couplet in the Baviad—

“See Thrale's grey widow with a satchel roam,
And bring in pomp laborious nothings home.”—E.

³ A line from some verses that he had received.—M. B.

no aisles, like every common cathedral. I suppose you would object to a bird of paradise, because it has no legs, but shoots to heaven in a trait, and does not rest on earth. Criticism and comparison spoil many tastes. You should admire all bold and unique essays that resemble nothing else; the Botanic Garden, the Arabian Nights, and King's Chapel are above all rules: and how preferable is what no one can imitate, to all that is imitated even from the best models! Your partiality to the pageantry of popery I do approve, and I doubt whether the world will not be a loser (in its visionary enjoyments) by the extinction of that religion, as it was by the decay of chivalry and the proscription of the heathen deities. Reason has no invention; and as plain sense will never be the legislator of human affairs, it is fortunate when taste happens to be regent.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1789.

I ALMOST think I shall never abuse you again; nay, I would not, did not it prove so extremely good for you. No walnut-tree is better for being threshed than you are; and, though you have won my heart by your compliance, I don't know whether my conscience will not insist on my using you ill now and then; for is there any precedent for gratitude not giving way to every other duty? Gratitude, like an earl's eldest son, is but titular, and has no place upon *trials*. But I fear I am punning sillily, instead of thanking you seriously, as I do, for allowing me to print your lovely verses. My press can confer no honour; but, when I offer it, it is a certain mark of my sincerity and esteem. It has been dedicated to friendship, to charity — too often to worthless self-love; sometimes to the rarity of the pieces, and sometimes to the merit of them; now it will unite the first motive and the last.

My fall, for which you so kindly concern yourself, was not worth mentioning; for as I only bruised the muscles of my

side, instead of breaking a rib, camphire infused in arquebusade took off the pain and all consequences in five or six days: and one has no right to draw on the compassion of others for what one *has* suffered and is past. Some love to be pitied on that score; but forget that they only excite, in the best-natured, joy on their deliverance. You commend me too for not complaining of my chronical evil; but, my dear Madam, I should be blameable for the reverse. If I would live to seventy-two, ought I not to compound for the encumbrances of old age? And who has fewer? And who has more cause to be thankful to Providence for his lot? The gout, it is true, comes frequently, but the fits are short, and very tolerable; the intervals are full health. My eyes are perfect, my hearing but little impaired, chiefly to whispers, for which I certainly have little occasion: my spirits never fail; and though my hands and feet are crippled, I can use both, and do not wish to box, wrestle, or dance a hornpipe. In short, I am just infirm enough to enjoy all the prerogatives of old age, and to plead them against anything that I have not a mind to do. Young men must conform to every folly in fashion: drink when they had rather be sober; fight a duel if somebody else is wrong-headed; marry to please their fathers, not themselves; and shiver in a white waistcoat, because ancient almanacks, copying the Arabian, placed the month of June after May; though, when the style was reformed, it ought to have been intercalated between December and January. Indeed, I have been so childish as to cut my hay for the same reason, and am now weeping over it by the fireside. But to come to business.

You must suffer me to print two hundred copies; and if you approve it, I will send thirty to the Bishop of London out of your quota. You may afterwards give him more, if you please. I do not propose putting your name, unless you desire it; as I think it would swear with the air of ancientry you have adopted in the signature and notes. The authoress will be no secret; and as it will certainly get into magazines, why should not you deal privately beforehand with some bookseller, and have a second edition ready to appear soon after mine is finished? The difficulty of getting my edition at first,

from the paucity of the number and from being only given as presents, will make the second edition eagerly sought for; and I do not see why my anticipating the publication should deprive you of the profit. Rather than do that, I would print a smaller number. I wish to raise an additional appetite to that which everybody has for your writings; I am sure I did not mean to injure you. Pray think of this; there is time enough; I cannot begin to print under a week: my press has lain fallow for some time, and my printer must prepare ink, balls, &c.; and as I have but one man, he cannot be expeditious. I seriously do advise you to have a second edition ready: why should covetous booksellers run away with *all* the advantages of your genius? They get enough by their ample share of the sale.

I will say no more, but to repeat my thanks for your consent, which truly obliges me; and I am happy to have been the instrument of preserving what your modesty would have sunk. My esteem could not increase: but one likes to be connected by favours to those one highly values.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1789.

You are so good and punctual, that I will complain no more of your silence, unless you are silent. You must not relax, especially until you can give me better accounts of your health and spirits. I was peevish before with the weather; but, now it prevents your riding, I forget hay and roses, and all the comforts that are washed away, and shall only watch the weather-cock for an east wind in Yorkshire. What a shame that *I* should recover from the gout and from bruises, as I assure you I am entirely, and that *you* should have a complaint left! One would think that it was I was grown young again; for just now, as I was reading your letter in my bedchamber, while some of my *customers*¹ are seeing the house, I heard a gentleman in the armoury ask the

¹ The name given by Mr. Walpole to parties coming to view his house.—M. B.

housekeeper as he looked at the bows and arrows, "Pray, does Mr. Walpole shoot?" No, nor with pistols neither. I leave all weapons to Lady Salisbury¹ and Mr. Lenox;² and, since my double marriage, have suspended my quiver in the Temple of Hymen. Hygeia shall be my goddess, if she will send you back blooming to this region.

I wish I had preserved any correspondence in France, as you are curious about their present history; which I believe very momentous indeed. What little I have accidentally heard, I will relate, and will learn what more I can. On the King's being advised to put out his talons, Necker desired leave to resign, as not having been consulted, and as the measure violated his plan. The people, hearing his intention, thronged to Versailles; and he was forced to assure them from a balcony, that he was not to retire. I am not accurate in dates, nor warrant my intelligence, and therefore pretend only to send you detached scraps. Force being still in request, the Duc du Châtelet acquainted the King that he could not answer for the French guards. Châtelet, who, from his hot arrogant temper, I should have thought would have been one of the proudest opposers of the people, is suspected to lean to them. In short, Marshal Broglio is appointed commander-in-chief, and is said to have sworn on his sword, that he will not sheathe it till he has plunged it into the heart of *ce gros banquier Genevois*. I cannot reconcile this with Necker's stay at Versailles. That he is playing a deep game is certain. It is reported that Madame Necker tastes previously everything he swallows.³ A vast camp is

¹ Lady Mary-Amelia, daughter of Wills, first Marquis of Downshire; married, in 1773, to James seventh Earl of Salisbury, advanced, in August 1789, to the title of Marquis. Her ladyship was a warm patroness of the art of archery and a first-rate equestrian. In November 1835, at the age of eighty-four, she was burnt to death at Hatfield-house.—E.

² In consequence of a dispute, concerning words said to have been spoken at Daubigny's club, a duel took place at Wimbledon, on the 26th of May, between the Duke of York and Colonel Lenox, afterwards Duke of Richmond. Neither of the parties was wounded; and the seconds, Lords Rawdon and Winchilsea, certified, that both behaved with the utmost coolness and intrepidity.—E.

³ On the 11th of July, two days after the date of this letter, Necker

forming round Paris; but the army is mutinous — the tragedy may begin on the other side. They do talk of an engagement at Metz, where the French troops, espousing the popular cause, were attacked by two German regiments, whom the former cut to pieces. The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, who were at Paris, have thought it prudent to leave it; and my cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, who is near it, has just written to his daughters, that he is glad to be out of the town, that he may make his retreat easily.

Thus, you see the crisis is advanced far beyond orations, and wears all the aspect of civil war. For can one imagine that the whole nation is converted at once, and in some measure without provocation from the King, who, far from enforcing the prerogative like Charles the First, cancelled the despotism obtained for his grandfather by the Chancellor Maupeou, has exercised no tyranny, and has shown a disposition to let the constitution be amended. It did want it indeed; but I fear the present want of temper grasps at so much, that they defeat their own purposes; and where loyalty has for ages been the predominant characteristic of a nation, it cannot be eradicated at once. Pity will soften the tone of the moment; and the nobility and clergy have more interest in wearing a royal than a popular yoke; for great lords and high-priests think the rights of mankind a defalcation of their privileges. No man living is more devoted to liberty than I am; yet blood is a terrible price to pay for it! A martyr to liberty is the noblest of characters; but to sacrifice the lives of others, though for the benefit of all, is a strain of heroism that I could never ambition.

I have just been reading Voltaire's Correspondence,—one of those heroes who liked better to excite martyrs, than to be one. How vain would he be, if alive now! I was struck with one of his letters to La Chalotais, who was a true up-

received his dismissal and a formal demand to quit the kingdom. It was accompanied by a note from the King, praying him to depart in a private manner, for fear of exciting disturbances. Necker received this intimation just as he was dressing for dinner; after which, without divulging his intention to any one, he set out in the evening, with Madame Necker, for Basle. See Mignet, tom. i. p. 47.—E.

right patriot and martyr too. In the 221st Letter of the sixth volume, Voltaire says to him, "Vous avez jetté des germes qui produiront un jour plus qu'on ne pense." It was lucky for me that you inquired about France; I had not a halfpenny-worth more of news in my wallet.

A person who was very apt to call on you every morning for a minute, and stay three hours, was with me the other day, and his grievance from the rain was the swarms of gnats. I said, I supposed I have very bad blood, for gnats never bite me. He replied, "I believe I have bad blood too, for dull people, who would tire me to death, never come near me." Shall I beg a pallet-full of that repellent for you, to set in your window as barbers do?

I believe you will make me grow a little of a newsmonger, though you are none; but I know that at a distance, in the country, letters of news are a regale. I am not wont to listen to the batteries on each side of me at Hampton-court and Richmond; but in your absence I shall turn a less deaf ear to them, in hopes of gleanings something that may amuse you: though I shall leave their manufactures of scandal for their own home consumption; you happily do not deal in such wares. Adieu! I used to think the month of September the dullest of the whole set; now I shall be impatient for it.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1789.

THOUGH I am touchy enough with those I love, I did not think you dilatory, nor expect that answers to letters should be as quick as repartees. I do pity you for the accident that made you think yourself remiss.¹ I enjoy your pa-

¹ "You will think me a great brute and savage, dear Sir, for not having directly thanked you for your letter, till you have read my *pièce justificative*, and then you will think I should have been a greater brute and savage if I had; for the very day I received it, a very amiable neighbour, coming to call on us, was overturned from her phaeton into some water, her husband driving her. The poor lady was brought into our house, to all appearance dying. I thank God, however, she is now

tient's recovery; but almost smiled unawares at the idea of her being sopped, and coming out of the water bristling up her feathers and ermines, and assuming the dignity of a Jupiter Pluvius.

I beseech you not to fancy yourself vain on my being your printer: would Sappho be proud, though Aldus or Elzevir were her typographer? My press has no rank but from its narrowness, that is, from the paucity of its editions, and from being a volunteer. But a truce to compliments, and to reciprocal humility. Pray tell me how I shall convey your parcel to you: the impression is begun. I shall not dare, *vu le sujet*, to send a copy to Mrs. Garrick;¹ I do not know whether you will venture. Mrs. Boscawen shall have one, but it shall be in your name: so authorize me to present it, that neither of us may tell the whitest of fibs. Shall I deliver any others for you within my reach, to save you trouble?

I have no more corrections to make. I told you brutally at first of the only two faults I found, and you sacrificed them with the patience of a martyr; for I conclude that when a good poet knowingly sins against measure twice, he is persuaded that he makes amends by greater beauties: in such case docility deserves the palm-branch. I do not applaud your declining a London edition; but you have been so tractable, that I will let you have your way in this, though you only make over profit to magazines. Being an honest printer myself, I have little charity for those banditti of my profession who pilfer from everybody they find on the road.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night. [July 15, 1789.]

I WRITE a few lines only to confirm the truth of much of what you will read in the papers from Paris. Worse may already be come, or is expected every hour.

out of danger; but our attendance, day and night, on the maimed lady and the distressed husband banished poetry from my thoughts, and suspended all power of writing nonsense." Miss More to Walpole. *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 160.—E.

¹ Mrs. Garrick was a Roman Catholic.—E.

Mr. Mackenzie and Lady Betty called on me before dinner, after the post was gone out; and he showed me a letter from Dutens, who said two couriers arrived yesterday from the Duke of Dorset and the Duchess of Devonshire, the latter of whom was leaving Paris directly. Necker had been dismissed, and was thought to be set out for Geneva. Breteuil, who was at his country-house, had been sent for to succeed him. Paris was in an uproar; and, after the couriers had left it, firing of cannon was heard for four hours together. That must have been from the Bastille,¹ as probably the *tiers état* were not so provided. It is shocking to imagine what may have happened in such a thronged city! One of the couriers was stopped twice or thrice, as supposed to pass from the King; but redeemed himself by pretending to be dispatched by the *tiers état*. Madame de Calonne told Dutens, that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds.

Here seems the egg to be hatched, and imagination runs away with the idea. I may fancy I shall hear of the King and Queen leaving Versailles, like Charles the First, and then skips imagination six-and-forty years lower, and figures their fugitive majesties taking refuge in this country. I have besides another idea. If the Bastille conquers, still is it impossible, considering the general spirit in the country, and the numerous fortified places in France, but some may be seized by the *dissidents*, and whole provinces be torn from the crown? On the other hand, if the King prevails, what heavy despotism will the *états*, by their want of temper and moderation, have drawn on their country! They might have obtained many capital points, and removed great oppression. No French monarch will ever summon *états* again, if this moment has been thrown away.

Though I have stocked myself with such a set of visions for the event either way, I do not pretend to foresee what will happen. Penetration argues from reasonable probabilities; but chance and folly are apt to contradict calculation, and

¹ For an interesting account of the storming and destruction of the Bastille, on the 14th of July, see Mr. Shoberl's valuable translation of M. Thiers's "History of the French Revolution," vol. i. p. 59.—E.

hitherto they seem to have full scope for action. One hears of no genius on either side, nor do symptoms of any appear. There will perhaps: such times and tempests bring forth, at least bring out, great men. I do not take the Duke of Orleans or Mirabeau to be built *du bois dont on les fait*; no, nor Monsieur Necker.¹ He may be a great traitor, if he made the confusion designedly: but it is a woful evasion, if the promised financier slips into a black politician! I adore liberty, but I would bestow it as honestly as I could; and a civil war, besides being a game of chance, is paying a very dear price for it.

For us, we are in most danger of a deluge; though I wonder we so frequently complain of long rains. The saying about St. Swithin is a proof of how often they recur; for proverbial sentences are the children of experience, not of prophecy. Good night! In a few days I shall send you a beautiful little poem from the Strawberry press.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, July 20, 1789.

MY EXCELLENT FRIEND,

I NEVER shall be angry with your conscientiousness, though I will not promise never to scold it, as you know I think you sometimes carry it too far; and how pleasant to have a friend to scold on such grounds! I see all your delicacy in what you call your *double treachery*, and your kind desire of connecting two of your friends.² The seeds are sprung up

¹ "It was in vain," says Sir Walter Scott, "that the Marquis de Bouillé pointed out the dangers arising from the constitution assigned to the States General, and insisted that the minister was arming the popular part of the nation against the two privileged orders, and that the latter would soon experience the effects of their hatred. Necker calmly replied, that there was a necessary reliance to be placed on the virtues of the human heart—the maxim of a worthy man, but not of an enlightened statesman, who has but too much reason to know how often both the virtues and the prudence of human nature are surmounted by its prejudices and passions." *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, vol. i. p. 107 ed. 1834.—E.

² With the view of making Bishop Porteus and Walpole better known

already; and the Bishop has already condescended to make me the first, and indeed so unexpected a visit, that, had I in the least surmised it, I should certainly, as became me, have prevented him. One effect, however, I can tell you your pimping between us will have: his lordship has, to please your partiality, flattered me so agreeably in the letter you *betrayed*, that I shall never write to you again without the dread of attempting the wit he is so liberal as to bestow on me; and then either way I must be dull or affected, though I hope to have the grace to prefer the former, and then you only will be the sufferer, as we both should by the latter. But I will come to facts: they are plain bodies, can have nothing to do with wit, and yet are not dull to those who have anything to do with them.

According to your order, I have delivered *Ghosts*¹ to Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, Lady Juliana Penn, Mrs. Walsingham, and Mr. Pepys. Mr. Batt, I am told, leaves London to-day; so I shall reserve his to his return. This morning I carried his thirty to the Bishop of London, who said modestly, he should not have expected above ten. I was delighted with the palace, with the venerable chapel, and its painted episcopalties in glass, and the brave hall, &c. &c. Though it rained, I would crawl to Bonner's chair. In short, my satisfaction would have been complete, but for wanting the presence of that jesuitess, "the good old papist."

To-morrow departs for London, to be delivered to the Bristol coach at the White-horse-cellar in Piccadily, a parcel containing sixty-four Ghosts, one of which is printed on brown for your own eating. There is but one more such, so you may preserve it like a relic. I know these two are not so good as the white: but, as rarities, a collector would give ten times more for them; and *uniquity* will make them valued more

to each other, Miss More had committed what she called a double treachery, in showing to the Bishop a letter she had received from Walpole, and to Walpole one sent her by the Bishop.—E.

¹ Though the author of this poem must have been known to so many individuals in the year 1789, the secret was so well kept, that it was actually printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for February 1804 as the production of Walpole.—E.

than the charming poetry. I believe, if there was but one ugly woman in the world, she would occasion a longer war than Helen did. You will find the Bishop's letter in the parcel. I did not breathe a hint of my having seen it, as I could not conjure up into my pale cheeks the blush I ought to exhibit on such flattery.

I pity you most sincerely for your almost drowned guest. Fortune seems to delight in throwing poor *Louisas* in your way, that you may exercise your unbounded charity and benevolence. Adieu! pray write. I need not *write* to you to *pray*; but I wish, when your knees have what the common people call a worky-day, you would employ your hands the whole time. Yours most cordially.

P. S. I believe I have blundered, and that your knees would call a week-day a holiday.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, July 29, 1789.

I HAVE received two dear letters from you of the 18th and 25th; and though you do not accuse me, but say a thousand kind things to me in the most agreeable manner, I allow my ancientry, and that I am an old, jealous, and peevish husband, and quarrel with you if I do not receive a letter exactly at the moment I please to expect one. You talk of mine; but, if you knew how I like yours, you would not wonder that I am impatient, and even unreasonable in my demands. However, though I own my faults, I do not mean to correct them. I have such pleasure in *your* letters (I am sorry I am here forced to speak in the singular number, which by the way is an Irishism,) that I *will* be cross if you do not write to me perpetually. The quintessence of your last but one was, in telling me you are better: how fervently do I wish to receive such accounts every post. But who can mend but old I, in such detestable weather? — not one hot day; and, if a morning shines, the evening closes with a heavy shower.

Of French news I can give you no fresher or more authentic account, than you can collect in general from the newspapers; but my present visitants and everybody else confirm the veracity of Paris being in that anarchy that speaks the populace domineering in the most cruel and savage manner, and which a servile multitude broken loose calls liberty; and which in all probability will end, when their Massaniello-like reign is over, in their being more abject slaves than ever; and chiefly by the crime of their *Etats*, who, had they acted with temper and prudence, might have obtained from their poor and undesigning King a good and permanent constitution. Who may prove their tyrant, if reviving loyalty does not in a new phrenzy force him to be so, it is impossible to foresee; but much may happen first. The rage seems to gain the provinces, and threatens to exhibit the horrors of those times when the peasants massacred the gentlemen. Thus you see I can only conjecture, which is not sending you news; and my intelligence reaches me by so many rebounds, that you must not depend on any thing I can tell you. I repeat, because I hear; but draw on you for no credit. Having experienced last winter, in superaddition to a long life of experience, that in Berkeley Square I could not trust to a single report from Kew, can I swallow implicitly at Twickenham the distorted information that comes from Paris through the medium of London?

You asked me in one of your letters who La Chalotais was. I answer, premier président or avocat-général, I forget which, of the Parliament of Bretagne; a great, able, honest, and most virtuous man, who opposed the Jesuits and the tyranny of the Duc d'Aiguillon; but he was as indiscreet as he was good. Calonne was his friend and confident; to whom the imprudent patriot trusted, by letter, his farther plan of opposition and desigus. The wretch pretended to have business with, or to be sent for by, the Duc de la Vrillière, secretary of state; a courtier-wretch, whose mistress used to sell *lettres de cachet* for a louis.¹ Calonne was left to wait in the

¹ The Duc de la Vrillière was dismissed in 1775, and succeeded by M.

antechamber; but being, as he said, suddenly called in to the minister, as he was reading (a most natural soil for such a lecture) the letter of his friend, he by a second *natural* inadvertence left the fatal letter on the chimney-piece. The consequence, much more *natural*, was, that La Chalotais was committed to the Château du Taureau, a horrible dungeon on a rock in the sea, with his son, whose legs mortified there, and the father was doomed to the scaffold; but the Duc de Choiseul sent a counter reprieve by an express and a cross-road, and saved him.¹ At the beginning of this reign he was restored. Paris, however, was so indignant at the treachery, that this Calonne was hissed out of the theatre, when I was in that capital.² When I heard, some years after, that a Calonne was made contrôleur-général, I concluded it must be a son, not conceiving that so reprobated a character could emerge to such a height; but asking my sister, who has been in France since I was, she assured me it was not only the identical being, but that when she was at Metz, where I think he was intendant, the officers in garrison would not dine with him. When he fled hither for an asylum, I did not talk of his story till I saw it in one of the pamphlets that were written against him in France, and that came over hither.

Friday night, 31st.

My company prevented my finishing this: part left me at noon, the residue are to come to-morrow. To-day I have dined at Fulham³ along with Mrs. Boscawen; but St. Swithin

de Malesherbes. Madame du Deffand's letter to Walpole of June 26, 1774, contains the following epigram on him:—

“ Ministre sans talent ainsi que sans vertu,
Couvert d'ignominie autant qu'on le peut être,
Retire-toi donc! Qu'attends-tu?
Qu'on te jette par la fenêtre? ”—E.

¹ La Chalotais died in July 1785. Among other works, he wrote an “Essay on National Education,” which was reprinted in 1825. His son perished by the guillotine in January 1794.—E.

² “An intrigue brought M. de Calonne forward, who was not in good odour with the public, because he had contributed to the persecution of La Chalotais.” Thiers, vol. i. p. 5.—E.

³ With Bishop Porteus. “I fear,” writes Hannah More, on hearing of this dinner, “I shall secretly triumph in the success of my fraud, if has contributed to bring about any intercourse between the Abbey of Fulham and the Castle of Otranto. It sounds so ancient and so feudal!

played the devil so, that we could not stir out of doors, and had fires to chase the watery spirits. Quin, being once asked if he had ever seen so bad a winter, replied, "Yes, just such an one last summer!"—and here is its youngest brother!

Mrs. Boscawen saw a letter from Paris to Miss Sayer this morning, which says Necker's son-in-law was arrived, and had announced his father-in-law's promise of return from Basle. I do not know whether his honour or ambition prompt this compliance; surely not his discretion. I am much acquainted with him, and do not hold him great and profound enough to quell the present anarchy. If he attempts to moderate for the King, I shall not be surprised if he falls another victim to tumultuary jealousy and outrage.¹ All accounts agree in the violence of the mob against the inoffensive as well as against the objects of their resentment; and in the provinces, where even women are not safe in their houses. The hotel of the Duc de Chatelet, lately built and superb, has been assaulted, and the furniture sold by auction;² but a most shocking act of a royalist in Burgundy, who is said to have blown up a committee of forty persons, will probably spread the flames of civil rage much wider. When I read the account I did not believe it; but the Bishop of London says, he hears the Etats

But among the things which pleased you in the episcopal domain, I hope the lady of it has that good fortune; she is quite a model of a pleasant wife. Now, I am acquainted with a great many *very* good wives, who are so notable and so manageable, that they make a man everything but happy; and I know a great many others who sing, and play, and paint, and cut paper, and are so *accomplished*, that they have no time to be *agreeable*, and no desire to be useful." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 165.—E.

¹ On the 16th of July, five days after the dismissal of M. Necker, the National Assembly obtained his recal. His return from Basle to Paris was one continued triumph. During the next twelve months, he was constantly presenting new financial statements; but he soon perceived that his influence was daily diminishing: at length the famous Red Book appeared, and completely put an end to his popularity. In September 1790, his resignation was accepted: as he was quitting the kingdom, his carriage was stopped by the same populace which had so recently drawn him into Paris in triumph; and it was necessary to apply to the Assembly for an order, directing that he should be allowed to proceed to Switzerland. He obtained this permission, and retired to Coppet, "there," says M. Thiers, "to contemplate at a distance, a revolution which he was no longer qualified to observe closely or to guide."—E.

² The Duke, who was colonel of the King's guard, narrowly escaped assassination.—E.

have required the King to write to every foreign power not to harbour the execrable author, who is fled.¹ I fear this conflagration will not end as rapidly as that in Holland !

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.²

Strawberry Hill, July 31, 1789.

HAVING had my house full of relations till this evening, I could not answer the favour of your letter sooner; and now I am ashamed of not being able to tell you that I have finished reading your “Essay on the Ancient History of Scotland.” I am so totally unversed in the story of original nations, and I own always find myself so little interested in savage manners unassisted by individual characters, that, though *you* lead me with a firmer hand than any historian through the dark tracts, the clouds close round me the moment I have passed them, and I retain no memory of the ground I have trod. I greatly admire your penetration, and read with wonder your clear discovery of the kingdom of Strathclyde; but, though I bow to you, as I would to the founder of an empire, I confess I do not care a straw about your subjects, with whom I am no more acquainted than with the ancient inhabitants of Otaheite. Your origin of the Piks is most able; but then I cannot remember them with any precise discrimination from any other Hyperborean nation: and all the barbarous names at the end of the first volume, and the gibberish in the Appendix, was to me as unintelligible as if I repeated Abracadabra; and made no impression on me but to raise respect of your patience, and admire a sagacity that could extract meaning and suite from what seemed to me the most indigestible of all materials. You rise in my estimation in proportion to the disagreeable mass of your ingredients. What gave me pleasure that I felt, was the exquisite sense and wit of your Introduction; and your masterly handling and confutation of the Mac-

¹ After an inquiry, instituted by the National Assembly, the whole was found to be a villanous fabrication.—E.

² Now first collected.

phersons, Whitaker, &c. there and through your work. Objection I have but one, I think you make yourself too much a party against the Celts. I do not think they were or are worthy of hatred.

Upon the whole, dear Sir, you see that your work is too learned and too deep for my capacity and shallow knowledge. I have told you that my reading and knowledge is and always was trifling and superficial, and never taken up or pursued but for present amusement. I always was incapable of dry and unentertaining studies; and of all studies the origin of nations never was to my taste. Old age and frequent disorders have dulled both my curiosity and attention, as well as weakened my memory; and I cannot fix my attention to long deductions. I say to myself, "What is knowledge to me, who stand on the verge, and must leave any old stores as well as what I may add to them; and how little could that be?"

Having thus confessed the truth, I am sure you are too candid and liberal to be offended: you cannot doubt of my high respect for your extraordinary abilities: I am even proud of having discovered them of myself without any clue. I should be very insincere, if I pretended to have gone through with eagerness your last work, which demands more intense attention than my age, eyes, and avocations will allow. I cannot read long together; and you are sensible that your work is not a book to be read by snatches and intervals; especially as the novelty, to me at least, requires some helps to connect it with the memory.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 9, 1789.

You are not very corresponding, (though better of late,) and therefore I will not load the conscience of your fingers much, lest you should not answer me in three months. I am happy that you are content with my edition of your Ghost, and with the brown copy. Everybody is charmed with your

¹ Now first collected.

poem : I have not heard one breath but of applause. In confirmation, I enclose a note to me from the Duchess of Gloucester, who certainly never before wished to be an authoress. You may lay it up in the archives of Cowslip-green, and carry it along with your other testimonials to Parnassus.¹ Mr. Carter, to whom I sent a copy, is delighted with it. The Bishop, with whom I dined last week, is extremely for your printing an edition for yourself, and desired I would press you to it. Mind, I do press you ; and could Bonner's Ghost be laid again,—which is impossible, for it will walk for ever, and by day too,—we would have it laid in the Red Sea by some West Indian merchant, who must be afraid of spirits, and cannot be in charity with you. Mrs. Boscawen dined at Fulham with me. It rained all day ; and, though the last of July, we had fires in every room, as if Bonner had been still in possession of the see.

I have not dared to recollect you too often by overt acts, dear Madam ; as, by the slowness of your answer, you seem to be sorry my memory was so very alert. Besides, it looks as if you had a mind to keep me at due distance, by the great civility and cold complimentality of your letter ; a style I flattered myself you had too much good will towards me to use. Pretensions to humility I know are generally traps to flattery ; but, could you know how very low my opinion is of myself, I am sure you would not have used the terms to me you did, and which I will not repeat, as they are by no means applicable to me. If I ever had tinsel parts, age has not only tarnished them, but convinced me how frippery they were.

Sweet are your Cowslips, sour my Strawberry Hill ;
My fruits are fallen, your blossoms flourish still.

¹ In reply to this, Miss More says, “ You not only do all you can to turn my head by printing my trumpery verses yourself, but you call in royal aid to complete my delirium. I comfort myself you will counteract some part of the injury you have done my principles this summer, by a regular course of abuse when we meet in the winter : remember that you owe this to my moral health ; next to being flattered, I like to be scolded ; but to be let quietly alone would be intolerable. Dr. Johnson once said to me, ‘ Never mind whether they praise or abuse your writings ; anything is tolerable except oblivion.’ ” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 169.—E.

Mrs. Boscawen told me last night, that she had received a long letter from you, which makes me flatter myself you have had no return of your nervous complaints. Mrs. Walsingham I have seen four or five times: Miss Boyle has decorated their house most charmingly; she has not only designed, but carved in marble, three beautiful bas-reliefs, with boys, for a chimney-piece; besides painting elegant pannels for the library, and forming, I do not know how, pilasters of black and gold beneath glass; in short, we are so improved in taste, that, if it would be decent, I could like to live fifty or sixty years more, just to see how matters go on. In the mean time, I wish my Macbethian wizardess would tell me "that Cowslip Dale should come to Strawberry Hill;" which, by the etiquette of oracles, you know, would certainly happen, because so improbable. I will be content if the nymph of the dale will visit the old man of the mountain, and her most sincere friend.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 14, 1789.

I MUST certainly have expressed myself very awkwardly, dear Sir, if you conceive I meant the slightest censure on your book, much less on your manner of treating it; which is as able, and clear, and demonstrative as possible. No; it was myself, my age, my want of apprehension and memory, and my total ignorance of the subject, which I intended to blame. I never did taste or study the very ancient histories of nations. I never had a good memory for names of persons, regions, places, which no specific circumstances concurred to make me remember: and now, at seventy-two, when, as is common, I forget numbers of names most familiar to me, is it possible I should read with pleasure any work that consists of a vocabulary so totally new to me? Many years ago, when my faculties were much less impaired, I

¹ Now first collected.

was forced to quit Dow's History of Indostan, because the Indian names made so little impression on me, that I went backward instead of forward, and was every minute reverting to the former page to find about whom I was reading. Your book was a still more laborious work to me; for it contains such a series of argumentation that it demanded a double effort from a weak old head; and, when I had made myself master of a deduction, I forgot it the next day, and had my pains to renew. These defects have for some time been so obvious to me, that I never read now but the most trifling books; having often said that, at the very end of life, it is useless to be improving one's stock of knowledge, great or small, for the next world. Thus, Sir, all I have said in my last letter or in this, is an encomium on your work, not a censure or criticism. It would be hard on you, indeed, if my incapacity detracted from your merit.

Your arguments in defence of works of science and deep disquisition are most just; and I am sure I have neither power nor disposition to answer them. You have treated your matter as it ought to be treated. Profound men or conversant in the subject, like Mr. Dempster, will be pleased with it, for the very reasons that made it difficult to me. If Sir Isaac Newton had written a fairy tale, I should have swallowed it eagerly; but do you imagine, Sir, that, idle as I am, I am idiot enough to think that Sir Isaac had better have amused me for half an hour, than enlightened mankind and all ages? I was so fair as to confess to you that your work was above me, and did not divert me: you was too candid to take that ill, and must have been content with silently thinking me very silly; and I am too candid to condemn any man for thinking of me as I deserve. I am only sorry when I do deserve a disadvantageous character.

Nay, Sir, you condescend, after all, to ask my opinion of the best way of treating antiquities; and, by the context, I suppose you mean, how to make them entertaining. I cannot answer you in one word; because there are two ways, as there are two sorts of readers. I should therefore say, to please antiquaries of judgment, as you have treated them,

with arguments and proofs; but, if you would adapt antiquities to the taste of those who read only to be diverted, not to be instructed, the nostrum is very easy and short. You must *divert* them in the true sense of the word *diverto*; you must turn them out of the way, you must treat them with digressions nothing or very little to the purpose. But, easy as I call this recipe, you, I believe, would find it more difficult to execute, than the indefatigable industry you have employed to penetrate chaos and extract the truth. There have been professors who have engaged to adapt all kinds of knowledge to the meanest capacities. I doubt their success, at least on me: however, you need not despair; all readers are not as dull and superannuated as, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Strawberry Hill, August 19, 1789.

I WILL not use many words, but enough, I hope, to convince you that I meant no irony in my last. All I said of you and myself was very sincere. It is my true opinion that your understanding is one of the strongest, most manly, and clearest I ever knew; and, as I hold my own to be of a very inferior kind, and know it to be incapable of sound, deep application, I should have been very foolish if I had attempted to sneer at you or your pursuits. Mine have always been light and trifling, and tended to nothing but my casual amusement; I will not say, without a little vain ambition of showing some parts; but never with industry sufficient to make me apply them to anything solid. My studies, if they could be called so, and my productions, were alike desultory. In my latter age I discovered the futility both of my objects and writings: I felt how insignificant is the reputation of an author of mediocrity; and that, being no genius, I only added one name more to a list of writers that had told the world nothing but what it could as well be without.

These reflections were the best proofs of my sense; and,

¹ Now first collected.

when I could see through my own vanity, there is less wonder at my discovering that such talents as I might have had, are impaired at seventy-two. Being just to myself, I am not such a coxcomb as to be unjust to you. No, nor did I cover any irony towards you, in the opinion I gave you of the way of making deep writings palatable to the mass of readers. Examine my words; and I am sure you will find that, if there was anything ironic in my meaning, it was levelled at your readers, not at you. It is my opinion that whoever wishes to be read by many, if his subject is weighty and solid, must treat the majority with more than is to his purpose. Do not you believe that twenty name Lucretius because of the poetic commencement of his books, for five that wade through his philosophy?

I promised to say but little; and, if I have explained myself clearly, I have said enough. It is not, I hope, my character to be a flatterer: I do most sincerely think you capable of great things; and I should be a pitiful knave if I told you so, unless it was my opinion; and what end could it serve to me? Your course is but beginning; mine is almost terminated. I do not want you to throw a few daisies on my grave; and if you make the figure I augur you will, I shall not be a witness to it. Adieu, dear Sir!

TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, August 24, 1789.

I SHALL heartily lament with you, Sir, the demolition of those beautiful chapels at Salisbury. I was scandalized long ago at the ruinous state in which they were indecently suffered to remain. It appears as strange, that, when a spirit of restoration and decoration has taken place, it should be mixed with barbarous innovation. As much as taste has improved, I do not believe that modern execution will equal our models. I am sorry that I can only regret, not prevent. I do not know the Bishop of Salisbury¹ even by sight, and

¹ Dr. Shute Barrington; in 1791, translated to the see of Durham.—E.

certainly have no credit to obstruct any of his plans. Should I get sight of Mr. Wyatt, which it is not easy to do, I will remonstrate against the intended alteration; but probably without success, as I do not suppose he has authority enough to interpose effectually: still I will try. It is an old complaint with me, Sir, that when families are extinct, chapters take the freedom of removing ancient monuments, and even of selling over again the sites of such tombs. A scandalous, nay, dishonest abuse, and very unbecoming clergymen! Is it creditable for divines to traffic for consecrated ground, and which the church had already sold? I do not wonder that magnificent monuments are out of fashion, when they are treated so disrespectfully. You, Sir, alone have placed several out of the reach of such a kind of simoniacal abuse; for to buy into the church, or to sell the church's land twice over, breathes a similar kind of spirit. Perhaps, as the subscription indicates taste, if some of the subscribers could be persuaded to object to the removal of the two beautiful chapels, as contrary to their view of beautifying, it might have good effect; or, if some letter were published in the papers against the destruction, as barbarous and the result of bad taste, it might divert the design. I zealously wish it were stopped, but I know none of the chapter or subscribers.¹

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday evening, Aug. 27, 1789.

I JUMPED for joy,—that is, my heart did, which is all the remain of me that is in *statu jumpante*,—at the receipt of your

¹ Much discussion on the subject of the injury done to Salisbury cathedral, here complained of by Walpole, took place in the Gentleman's Magazine for this and the following year. "This good," says the writer of a learned article on Cathedral Antiquities, in the Quarterly Review for 1825, "has arisen from the injury which was done at Salisbury, that in subsequent undertakings of the same kind, the architect has come to his work with greater respect for the structures upon which he was employed, and a mind more imbued with the principles of Gothic architecture."—E.

letter this morning, which tells me you approve of the house at Teddington. How kind you was to answer so incontinently! I believe you borrowed the best steed from the races. I have sent to the landlord to come to me to-morrow: but I could not resist beginning my letter to-night, as I am at home alone, with a little pain in my left wrist; but the right one has no brotherly feeling for it, and would not be put off so. You ask how you have deserved such attentions? Why, by deserving them; by every kind of merit, and by that superlative one to me, your submitting to throw away so much time on a forlorn antique—you two, who, without specifying particulars, (and you must, at least, be conscious that you are not two frights,) might expect any fortune and distinctions, and do delight all companies. On which side lies the wonder? Ask me no more such questions, or I will cram you with reasons.

My poor dear niece¹ grows worse and worse: the medical people do not pretend to give us any hopes; they only say she may last some weeks, which I do not expect, nor do absent myself. I had promised Mr. Barrett to make a visit to my Gothic child, his house, on Sunday; but I have written to-day to excuse myself: so I have to the Duchess of Richmond,² who wanted me to meet her mother, sister,³ and General Conway, at Goodwood next week.

I wish Lady Fitzwilliam may not hear the same bad news as I expect, in the midst of her royal visitors: her sister, the Duchess of St. Albans, is dying, in the same way as Lady Dysart; and for some days has not been in her senses. How charming you are to leave those festivities for your good parents; who I do not wonder are impatient for you. I, who am old enough to be your great-grandmother, know one needs not be your near relation to long for your return. Of all your

¹ The Countess of Dysart.—M. B.

² Lady Mary Bruce, daughter of the Earl of Ailesbury, by Caroline Campbell, daughter of General John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyle.—M. B.

³ Mrs. Damer, only child of the Dowager Countess of Ailesbury, by Marshal Henry Seymour Conway, her second husband. She was thus half-sister to the Duchess of Richmond.—M. B.

four, next to your duteous visits, I most approve the jaunt to the sea: I believe in its salutary air more than in the whole college and all its works.

You must not expect any news from me, French or home-bred. I am not in the way of hearing any: your morning gazetteer rarely calls on me, as I am not likely to pay him in kind. About royal progresses, paternal or filial, I never inquire; nor do you, I believe, care more than I do. The small wares in which the societies at Richmond and Hampton-court deal, are still less to our taste. My poor niece and her sisters take up most of my time and thoughts: but I will not attrist you to indulge myself, but will break off here, and finish my letter when I have seen your new landlord. Good night!

Friday.

Well! I have seen him, and nobody was ever so accommodating! He is as courteous as a candidate for a county. You may stay in his house till Christmas if you please, and shall pay but twenty pounds; and if more furniture is wanting, it shall be supplied.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 4, 1789.

You ask whether I will call you wise or stupid for leaving York races in the middle — neither; had you chosen to stay, you would have done rightly. The more young persons see, where there is nothing blameable, the better; as increasing the stock of ideas early will be a resource for age. To resign pleasure to please tender relations is amiable, and superior to wisdom; for wisdom, however laudable, is but a selfish virtue. But I do decide peremptorily, that it was very prudent to decline the invitation to Wentworth House,¹ which was obligingly given; but, as I am very proud for you, I should have disliked your being included in a mobbish kind

¹ The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were going to receive a great entertainment at Wentworth House.—M. B.

of *cohue*. You two are not to go where any other two misses would have been equally *priées*, and where people would have been thinking of the princes more than of the Berrys. Besides, princes are so rife now, that, besides my sweet nephew¹ in the Park, we have another at Richmond: the Duke of Clarence has taken Mr. Henry Hobart's house, point-blank over against Mr. Cambridge's, which will make the good woman of that mansion cross herself piteously, and stretch the throat of the blatant beast at Sudbrook,² and of all the other pious matrons *à la ronde*; for his Royal Highness, to divert lonesomeness, has brought with him — ———, who, being still more averse to solitude, declares that any tempter would make even Paradise more agreeable than a constant *tête-à-tête*.

I agree with you in not thinking Beatrice one of Miss Farren's capital parts. Mrs. Pritchard played it with more spirit, and was superior to Garrick's Benedict; so is Kemble, too, as he is to Quin in Maskwell. Kemble and Lysons the clergyman³ passed all Wednesday here with me. The former is melting the three parts of Henry the Sixth into one piece: I doubt it will be difficult to make a tolerable play out of them.

I have talked scandal from Richmond, like its gossips; and now, by your queries after Lady Luxborough, you are drawing me into more, which I do not love: but she is dead and forgotten, except on the shelves of an old library, or on those of my old memory; which you will be routing into. The lady you wot of, then, was the first wife of Lord Catherlogh, before he was an earl; and who was son of Knight, the South Sea cashier, and whose second wife lives here at Twickenham. Lady Luxborough, a high-coloured lusty black woman, was parted from her husband, upon a gallantry she had with Dalton, the reviver of Comus and a divine. She retired into the country; corresponded, as you see by her letters, with the

¹ The Duke of Gloucester.—E.

² Lady Greenwich.

³ The "little Daniel" of the Pursuits of Literature, brother of Samuel Lysons, the learned antiquary, and author of "The Environs, twelve miles round London," in four volumes quarto—

"Nay once, for purer air o'er rural ground,
With little Daniel went his twelve miles round."—E.

small poets of that time; but, having no Theseus amongst them, consoled herself, as it is said, like Ariadne, with Bacchus.¹ This might be a fable, like that of her Cretan Highness — no matter; the fry of little anecdotes are so numerous now, that throwing one more into the shoal is of no consequence, if it entertains you for a moment; nor need you believe what I don't warrant.

Gra'mercy for your intention of seeing Wentworth Castle: it is my favourite of all great seats;—such a variety of ground, of wood, and water; and almost all executed and disposed with so much taste by the present Earl. Mr. Gilpin sillily could see nothing but faults there. The new front is, in my opinion, one of the lightest and most beautiful buildings on earth: and, pray like the little Gothic edifice, and its position in the menagerie! I recommended it, and had it drawn by Mr. Bentley, from Chichester Cross. Don't bring me a pair of scissars from Sheffield: I am determined nothing shall cut our loves, though I should live out the rest of Methusalem's term, as you kindly wish, and as I can believe, though you are my wives; for I am persuaded my Agnes wishes so too. Don't you?

At night.

I am just come from Cambridge's, where I have not been in an evening, time out of mind. Major Dixon, alias "the Charming-man,"² is there; but I heard nothing of the Emperor's rickets:³ a great deal, and many horrid stories, of

¹ Lady Luxborough died in 1756. Her letters to Shenstone were published in 1775. In the first leaf of the original manuscript there is an autograph of the poet, describing them as being "written with abundant ease, politeness, and vivacity; in which she was scarce equalled by any woman of her time." Some of her verses are printed in Dodsley's *Miscellany*, and Walpole has introduced her ladyship into his *Noble Authors*.—E.

² Edward Jerningham, Esq. of Cossey, in Norfolk, uncle to the present Lord Stafford. He was distinguished in his day by the name of *Jerningham the poet*; but it was an unpoetical day. The stars of Byron, of Baillie, and of Scott, had not risen on the horizon. The well-merited distinction of Jerningham was the friendship, affection, and intimacy which his amiable character had impressed on the author, and on all of his society mentioned in these letters.—M. B.

³ This alludes to something said in a character which Mr. Jerningham had assumed, for the amusement of a society some time before at Marshal Conway's.—M. B.

the violences in France; for his brother, the Chevalier Jer-ningham, is just arrived from Paris. You have heard of the destruction of thirty-two chateaus in Burgundy, at the instigation of a demon, who has since been broken on the rack. There is now assembled near Paris a body of sixteen thousand deserters, daily increasing; who, they fear, will encamp and dictate to the capital, in spite of their militia of twenty thousand bourgeois. It will soon, I suppose, ripen to several armies, and a civil war; a fine *acheminement* to liberty!

My poor niece is still alive, though weaker every day, and pronounced irrecoverable: yet it is possible she may live some weeks; which, however, is neither to be expected nor wished, for she eats little and sleeps less. Still she is calm, and behaves with the patience of a martyr.

You may perceive, by the former part of my letter, that I have been dipping into Spenser again, though he is no passion of mine: there I lighted upon two lines that, at first sight, reminded me of Mademoiselle d'Eon,

“ Now, when Marfisa had put off her beaver,
To be a woman every one perceive her; ”

but I do not think that is so perceptible in the Chevalière. She looked more feminine, as I remember her, in regimentals, than she does now. She is at best a hen-dragoon, or an Herculean hostess. I wonder she does not make a campaign in her own country, and offer her sword to the almost-dethroned monarch, as a second Joan of Arc.¹ Adieu! for

¹ Miss More gives the following account of this extraordinary character:—“ On Friday I gratified the curiosity of many years, by meeting at dinner Madame la Chevalière D'Eon; she is extremely entertaining, has universal information, wit, vivacity, and gaiety. Something too much of the latter (I have heard), when she has taken a bottle or two of Burgundy; but this being a very sober party, she was kept entirely within the limits of decorum. General Johnson was of the party, and it was ridiculous to hear her military conversation. Sometimes it was, ‘Quand j'étais colonel d'un tel régiment;’ then again, ‘Non, c'était quand j'étais secrétaire d'ambassade du Duc de Nivernois,’ or ‘Quand je négociais la paix de Paris.’ She is, to be sure, a phenomenon in history; and, as such, a great curiosity. But *one* D'Eon is enough, and *one slice* of her quite sufficient.” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 156.—E.

three weeks I shall say, Sancte Michael, ora pro nobis !
 You seem to have relinquished your plan of sea-coasting.
 I shall be sorry for that ; it would do you good.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 5, 1789.

You speak so unperemptorily of your motions, that I must direct to you at random : the most probable place where to hit you, I think, will be Goodwood ; and I do address this thither, because I am impatient to thank you for your tale, which is very pretty and easy and genteel. It has made me make a reflection, and that reflection made six lines ; which I send you, not as good, but as expressing my thoughts on your writing so well in various ways which you never practised when you was much younger. Here they are :

The Muse most wont to fire a youthful heart,
 To gild *your* setting sun reserved her art ;
 To crown a life in virtuous labours pass'd,
 Bestow'd her numbers, and her wit at last ;
 And, when your strength and eloquence retire,
 Your voice in notes harmonious shall expire.

The *swan* was too common a thought to be directly specified, and, perhaps, even to be alluded to : no matter, such a trifle is below criticism.

I am still here, in no uncertainty, God knows, about poor Lady Dysart,¹ of whom there are not the smallest hopes. She grows weaker every day, and does actually still go out for the air, and may languish many days, though most probably will go off in a moment, as the water rises. She retains her senses perfectly, and as perfectly her unalterable calmness and patience, though fully sensible of her situation. At your return from Goodwood, I shall like to come to you, if you are unengaged, and ready to receive me. For the

¹ Her ladyship, who was the daughter of Sir Edward Walpole and the first wife of Lionel fourth Earl of Dysart, died on the day this letter was written.—E.

beauties of Park-place, I am too well acquainted with them, not, like all old persons about their contemporaries, to think it preserves them long after they are faded; and I am so *unwalking*, that prospects are more agreeable to me when framed and glazed, and I look at them through a window. It is yourselves I want to visit, not your verdure. Indeed, except a parenthesis of scarce all August, there has been no temptation to walk abroad; and the tempter himself would not have persuaded me, if I could, to have climbed that long-lost mountain whence he could show one even the Antipodes. It rained incessantly all June and all July; and now again we have torrents every day.

Jerningham's brother, the Chevalier, is arrived from Paris, and does not diminish the horrors one hears every day. They are now in the capital dreading the sixteen thousand deserters who hover about them. I conclude that when in the character of banditti the whole disbanded army have plundered and destroyed what they can, they will congregate into separate armies under different leaders, who will hang out different principles, and the kingdom will be a theatre of civil wars; and, instead of liberty, the nation will get petty tyrants, perhaps petty kingdoms: and when millions have suffered, or been sacrificed, the government will be no better than it was, all owing to the intemperance of the *états*, who might have obtained a good constitution, or at least one much meliorated, if they had set out with discretion and moderation. They have left too a sad lesson to despotic princes, who will quote this precedent of frantic *états*, against assembling any more, and against all the examples of senates and parliaments that have preserved rational freedom. Let me know when it will be convenient to you to receive me. Adieu!

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. —, 1789.

I KNOW whence you wrote last, but not where you are now; you gave me no hint. I believe you fly lest I should pur-

sue, and as if you were angry that I have forced you to sprout into laurels. Yet you say you are vain of it, and that you are no philosopher. Now, if you are vain, I am sure you *are* a philosopher; for it is a maxim of mine, and one of my own making, that there never was a philosopher that did not love *sweetmeats*. You tell me too, that you like I should scold you; but since you have appeared as Bonner's ghost, I think I shall feel too much awe; for though (which I never expected would be in my power) I have made you stand *in a white sheet*, I doubt my respect is increased. I never did rate you for being too bad, but too good: and if, when you make up your week's account, you find but a fraction of vanity in the sum total, you will fall to repenting, and come forth on Monday as humble as * * *. Then, if I huff my heart out, you will only simper, and still wrap yourself up in your obstinate goodness. Well! take your own way; I give you up to all your abominable virtues, and will go answer the rest of your letter.

I congratulate you on the demolition of the Bastille; I mean as you do, of its functions.¹ For the poor soul itself, I had no ill will to it: on the contrary, it was a curious sample of ancient castellar dungeons, which the good folks the founders took for palaces: yet I always hated to drive by it, knowing the miseries it contained. Of itself it did not gobble up prisoners to glut its maw, but received them by command. The destruction of it was silly, and agreeable to the ideas of a mob, who do not know stones and bars and bolts from a *lettre de cachet*. If the country remains free, the Bastille would be as tame as a ducking-stool, now that there is no such thing as a scold. If despotism recovers, the Bastille will rise from its ashes!—recover, I fear, it will. The *Etats* cannot remain a mob of kings, and will prefer a single one to a larger mob of kings

¹ Miss More had written to Walpole,—“Poor France! though I am sorry that the lawless rabble are so triumphant, I cannot help hoping, that some good will arise from the sum of human misery having been so considerably lessened at one blow by the destruction of the Bastille. The utter extinction of the Inquisition, and the redemption of Africa, I hope yet to see accomplished.” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 170.—E.

and greater tyrants. The nobility, the clergy, and people of property will wait, till by address and money they can divide the people; or, whoever gets the larger or more victorious army into his hands, will be a Cromwell or a Monk. In short, a revolution procured by a national vertigo does not promise a crop of legislators. It is time that composes a good constitution: it formed ours. We were near losing it by the lax and unconditional restoration of Charles the Second. The revolution was temperate, and has lasted; and, though it might have been improved, we know that with all its moderation it disgusted half the nation, who would have brought back the old sores.

I abominate the Inquisition as much as you do: yet if the King of Spain receives no check like his cousin Louis, I fear he will not be disposed to relax any terrors. Every crowned head in Europe must ache at present; and the frantic and barbarous proceedings in France will not meliorate the stock of liberty, though for some time their majesties will be mighty tender of the rights of their subjects.

According to this hypothesis, I can administer some comfort to you about your poor negroes. I do not imagine that they will be emancipated at once; but their fate will be much alleviated, as the attempt will have alarmed their butchers enough to make them gentler, like the European monarchs, for fear of provoking the disinterested, who have no sugar plantations, to abolish the horrid traffic.

I do not understand the manœuvre of sugar, and, perhaps, am going to talk nonsense, as my idea may be impracticable; but I wish human wit, which is really very considerable in mechanics and merchantry, could devise some method of cultivating canes and making sugar without the manual labour of the human species. How many mills and inventions have there not been discovered to supply succedaneums to the work of the hands, and which before the discoveries would have been treated as visions! It is true, manual labour has sometimes taken it very ill to be excused, and has destroyed such mills; but the poor negroes would not rise and insist upon being worked to death. Pray talk

to some ardent genius, but do not name me; not merely because I may have talked like an idiot, but because my ignorance might, *ipso facto*, stamp the idea with ridicule. People, I know, do not love to be put out of their old ways: no farmer listens at first to new inventions in agriculture; and I don't doubt but bread was originally deemed a new-fangled vagary, by those who had seen their fathers live very comfortably upon acorns. Nor is there any harm in starting new game to invention: many excellent discoveries have been made by men who were *à la chasse* of something very different. I am not quite sure that the arts of making gold and of living for ever have been yet found out: yet to how many noble discoveries has the pursuit of those nostrums given birth! Poor chymistry, had she not had such glorious objects in view! If you are sitting under a cowslip at your cottage, these reveries may amuse you for half an hour, at least make you smile; and for the ease of your conscience, which is always in a panic, they require no answer.¹

I will not ask you about the new History of Bristol,² because you are too good a citizen to say a word against your native place; but do pray cast your eye on the prints of the cathedral and castle, the *chef-d'œuvres* of Chatterton's ignorance, and of Mr. Barrett's too; and on two letters pretended to have been sent to me, and which never were sent. If my incredulity had wavered, they would have fixed it. I wish the milkwoman would assert that Boadicea's dairy-maid had invented Dutch tiles; it would be like Chatterton's origin of heraldry and painted glass, in those two letters. I must, however, mention one word about myself. In the new fourth volume of the Biographia Britannica I am more candidly treated about that poor lad than usual: yet the

¹ To this passage Miss More thus replies:—"Your project for relieving our poor slaves by machine work is so far from being wild or chimerical, that of three persons deep and able in the concern (Mr. Wilberforce among others), not one but has thought it rational and practicable, and that a plough may be so constructed as to save much misery." *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 187.—E.

² "The History and Antiquities of Bristol, by William Barrett:" Bristol, 1789, quarto; a work which Mr. Park described as "a motley compound of real and superstitious history."—E.

writer still affirms that, according to my own account, my reply was too much in the common-place style of court-replies. Now my own words, and the truth, as they stand in print in the very letter of mine which this author quotes, were, "I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tenderness as if I had been his guardian." Is this by my own account a court-reply? Nor did I conceive, for I never was a courtier, that courtiers are wont to make *tender* replies to the poor; I am glad to hear they do.

I have kept this letter some days in my writing-box, till I could meet with a stray member of parliament, for it is not worth making you pay for: but when you talk to me I cannot help answering incontinently: besides, can one take up a letter at a long distance, and heat one's reply over again with the same interest that it occasioned at first? Adieu! I wish you may come to Hampton before I leave these purlieus!

Yours *More* and *More*.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4, 1789.

I AM not surprised, my dear Madam, that the notice of my illness should have stimulated your predominant quality, your sensibility. I cannot do less in return than relieve it immediately, by assuring you that I am in a manner recovered; and should have gone out before this time, if my mind were as much at ease as my poor limbs. I have passed five months most uncomfortably; the two last most unhappily. In June and September I had two bad falls by my own lameness and weakness, and was much bruised; while I was witness to the danger, and then to the death, of my invaluable niece, Lady Dysart. She was angelic, and has left no children. The unexpected death of Lord Waldegrave,¹ one of the most amiable of men, has not only deprived me of him, but has opened a

¹ George fourth Earl of Waldegrave, born in 1751; married, in 1782, his cousin Lady Elizabeth Laura Waldegrave, daughter of James, the second Earl. He died on the 22nd of October.—E.

dreadful scene of calamities ! He and my niece were the happiest and most domestic of couples.

Your kind inquiries after me have drawn these details from me, for which I make no excuse : good-nature never grudges its pity. I, who love to force your gravity to smile, am seriously better pleased to indulge your benevolence with a subject of esteem, which, though moving your compassion, will be accompanied by no compunction. I will now answer your letter. Your plea, that not composition, but business, has occasioned your silence, is no satisfaction to *me*. In my present anxious solitude I have again read Bonner and Florio, and the Bas Bleu ; and do you think I am pleased to learn that you have not been writing ? Who is it says something like this line ?—

Hannah will *not* write, and Lactilla *will*.

They who think her Earl Goodwin will outgo Shakspeare, might be in the right, if they specified in what way. I believe she may write worse than he sometimes did, though that is not easy ; but to excel him — oh ! I have not words adequate to my contempt for those who can suppose such a possibility !

I am sorry, very sorry, for what you tell me of poor Barrett's fate. Though he did write worse than Shakspeare, it is great pity he was told so, as it killed him ; and I rejoice that I did not publish a word in contradiction of the letters which he said Chatterton sent to me, as I was advised to do. I might have laughed at the poor man's folly, and then I should have been miserable to have added a grain to the poor man's mortification.¹

You rejoice *me*, not my vanity, by telling me my idea of a mechanic succedaneum to the labour of negroes is not visionary, but thought practicable. Oh ! how I wish I understood sugar and ploughs, and could marry them ! Alas ! I understand nothing useful. My head is as un-mechanic as it is un-arithmetic, un-geometric, un-metaphysic, un-commercial : but

¹ Mr. Barrett was the person who first encouraged Chatterton to publish the poems which he attributed to Rowley. He was a respectable surgeon at Bristol.—E.

will not some one of those superior heads to whom you have talked on my indigested hint reduce it to practicability? How a feasible scheme would stun those who call humanity romantic, and show, from the books of the Custom-house, that murder is a great improvement of the revenue! Even the present situation of France is favourable. Could not Mr. Wilberforce obtain to have the enfranchisement of the negroes started there? The Jews are claiming their natural rights there; and blacks are certainly not so great defaulters as the Hebrews, though they too have undergone ample persecutions. Methinks, as Lord George Gordon is in correspondence with the *Etats*, he has been a little remiss in not signing the petition of those of his new communion.

The *Etats* are detestable and despicable; and, in fact, guilty of the outrages of the Parisian and provincial mobs. The mob of twelve hundred, not legislators, but dissolvers of all laws, unchained the mastiffs that had been tied up, and were sure to worry all who fell in their way. To annihilate all laws, however bad, and to have none ready to replace them, was proclaiming anarchy. What should one think of a mad-doctor, who should let loose a lunatic, suffer him to burn Bedlam, chop off the heads of the keepers, and then consult with some students in physic on the gentlest mode of treating delirium? By a late vote I see that the twelve hundred praters are reduced to five hundred: *vive la reine Billingsgate!* the Thalestris who has succeeded Louis Quatorze! A committee of those Amazons stopped the Duke of Orleans, who, to use their style, I believe is not *a barrel the better herring*.

Your reflections on Vertot's passion for revolutions are admirable,¹ and yet it is natural for an historian to like to describe times of action. Halcyon days do not furnish matter for talents; they are like the virtuous couple in a comedy, a little insipid. Mr. Manly and Lady Grace, Mellefont and Cynthia, do not interest one much. Indeed, in a tragedy

¹ Miss More, in her last letter, had said—"What a pity it is that Vertot is not alive! that man's element was a state convulsion; he hopped over peaceful intervals, as periods of no value, and only seemed to enjoy himself when all the rest of the world was sad. Storm and tempest were his halcyon days."—E.

where they are unhappy, they give the audience full satisfaction, and no envy. The newspapers, no doubt, thought Dr. Priestley could not do better than to espouse you.¹ He certainly would be very judicious, could he obtain your consent; but, alas! you would soon squabble about Socinianism, or some of those *isms*. To tell you the truth, I hate all those Constantinopolitan jargons, that set people together by the ears about pedantic terms. When you apply scholastic phrases as happily and genteelly as you do in your *Bas Bleu*, they are delightful; but don't muddle your charming simplicity with controversial distinctions, that will sour your sweet piety. Sects are the bane of charity, and have deluged the world with blood.

I do not mean, by what I am going to say, to extort another letter from you before I have the pleasure of seeing you at Hampton; but I really shall be much obliged to you for a single line soon, only to tell me if Miss Williams is at Stoke with the Duchess of Beaufort. To a short note, cannot you add a short P. S. on the fate of Earl Goodwin?²

Lac mihi—novum non frigore desit.

Adieu! my amiable friend!

Yours most sincerely.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 20, 1790.

It is very provoking that people must always be hanging or drowning themselves, or going mad, that you forsooth,

¹ In her letter to Walpole Miss More had said,—“ I comforted myself, that your two fair wives were within reach of your elbow-chair, and that their pleasant society would somewhat mitigate the sufferings of your confinement. Apropos of two wives—when the newspapers the other day were pleased to marry me to Dr. Priestley, I am surprised they did not rather choose to bestow me on Mr. Madan, as *his* wife is probably better broken in to these eastern usages, than Mrs. Priestley may be. I never saw the Doctor but once in my life, and he had then been married above twenty years.” *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 188.—E.

² Ann Yearsley's tragedy, which had just been represented, with little success, at the Bath and Bristol theatres. In reply to Walpole's query, Miss More says, “ There are, I dare say, some pretty passages in it, but all seem to bring it in guilty of the crime of dullness; which I take to be the greatest fault in dramatic composition.”—E.

Mistress, may have the diversion of exercising your pity and good-nature, and charity, and intercession, and all that bead-roll of virtues that make you so troublesome and amiable, when you might be ten times more agreeable by writing things that would not cost one above half-a-crown at a time.¹ You are an absolutely walking hospital, and travel about into lone and bye places, with your doors open to house stray casualties! I wish at least that you would have some children yourself, that you might not be plaguing one for all the pretty brats that are starving and friendless. I suppose it was some such goody two or three thousand years ago that suggested the idea of an alma-mater, suckling the three hundred and sixty-five bantlings of the Countess of Hainault. Well, as your newly-adopted pensioners have *two* babes, I insist on your accepting *two* guineas for them instead of one at present (that is, when you shall be present). If you cannot circumscribe your own charities, you shall not stint mine, Madam, who can afford it much better, and who must be dunned for alms, and do not scramble over hedges and ditches in searching for opportunities of flinging away my money on good works. I employ mine better at auctions, and in buying pictures and baubles, and hoarding curiosities, that in truth I cannot keep long, but that will last *for ever* in my catalogue, and make me immortal! Alas! will they cover a multitude of sins? Adieu! I cannot jest after *that* sentence. Yours sincerely.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.²

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1790.

I AM glad at least that you was not fetched to town on last Tuesday, which was as hot as if Phaeton had once more gotten into his papa's curricule and driven it along the lower road; but the old king has resumed the reins again, and

¹ Miss More was at this time raising a subscription for the benefit of the family of a poor man who had been cut down after he had nearly hung himself.—E.

² Now first printed.

does not allow us a handful more of beams than come to our northern share. I am glad, too, that I was not summoned also to the *Fitzroyal* arrangement: it was better to be singed here, than exposed between two such fiery furnaces as Lady Southampton and my niece Keppel. I pity Charles Fox to be kept on the Westminster gridiron.¹ Before I came out of town, I was diverted by a story from the hustings: one of the mob called to Fox, "Well, Charley, are not you sick of your *coalition*?" "Poor gentleman!" cried an old woman in the crowd, "why should not he like a *collation*?"

I am very sorry Mrs. Damer is so tormented, but I hope the new inflammation will relieve her. As I was writing that sentence this morning, Mesdames de Boufflers came to see me from Richmond, and brought a Comte de Moranville to see my house. The puerile pedants of their Etats are going to pull down the statues of Louis Quatorze, like their silly ancestors, who proposed to demolish the tomb of John Duke of Bedford. The Vicomte de Mirabeau is arrested somewhere for something, perhaps for one of his least crimes; in short, I am angry that the cause of liberty is profaned by such rascals. If the two German Kings make peace, as you hear and as I expected, the Brabanters, who seem not to have known much better what to do with their revolution, will be the first sacrifice on the altar of peace.

I stick fast at the beginning of the first volume of Bruce,² though I am told it is the most entertaining; but I am sick of his vanity, and (I believe) of his want of veracity; I am sure, of his want of method and of his obscurity. I hope my wives were not at Park-place in your absence: the loss of them is irreparable to me, and I tremble to think how much more I shall feel it in three months, when I am to part with them for—who can tell how long? Adieu!

¹ At the close of the election, on the 2nd of July, the numbers were, for Mr. Fox 3516, Lord Hood 3217, and Mr. Horne Tooke 1697.—E.

² Bruce's "Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile," had just appeared, in five large quarto volumes. It was dedicated to George the Third, who, while society in general raised a cry of incredulity against it, stood up warmly in its favour, and contended that it was a great work.—E.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, June 26, 1790.

I do not forget your lordship's commands, though I do recollect my own inability to divert you. Every year at my advanced time of life would make more reasonable my plea of knowing nothing worth repeating, especially at this season. The general topic of elections is the last subject to which I could listen: there is not one about which I care a straw; and I believe your lordship quite as indifferent. I am not much more *au fait* of war or peace; I hope for the latter, nay and expect it, because it is not yet war. Pride and anger do not deliberate to the middle of the campaign; and I believe even the great incendiaries are more intent on making a good bargain than on saving their honour. If they save lives, I care not who is the better politician; and, as I am not to be their judge, I do not inquire what false weights they fling into the scales. Two-thirds of France, who are not so humble as I, seem to think they can entirely new-model the world with metaphysical compasses; and hold that no injustice, no barbarity, need to be counted in making the experiment. Such legislators are sublime empirics, and in their universal benevolence have very little individual sensibility. In short, the result of my reflections on what has passed in Europe for these latter centuries is, that tyrants have no consciences, and reformers no feeling; and the world suffers both by the plague and by the cure. What oceans of blood were Luther and Calvin the authors of being spilt! The late French government was detestable; yet I still doubt whether a civil war will not be the consequence of the revolution, and then what may be the upshot? Brabant was grievously provoked; is it sure that it will be emancipated? For how short a time do people who set out on the most just principles, advert to their first springs of motion, and retain consistency? Nay, how long can promoters of revolutions be sure of maintaining their own ascendant? They are like projectors, who are commonly ruined; while others make fortunes on the foundation laid by the inventors.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, July 1, 1790.

It is certainly not from having anything to tell you, that I reply so soon, but as the most agreeable thing I can do in my confinement. The gout came into my heel the night before last, perhaps from the deluge and damp. I increased it yesterday by limping about the house with a party I had to breakfast. To-day I am lying on the settee, unable to walk alone, or even to put on a slipper. However, as I am much easier this evening, I trust it will go off.

I do not love disputes, and shall not argue with you about Bruce; but, if you like him, you shall not choose an author for me. It is the most absurd, obscure, and tiresome book I know. I shall admire if you have a clear conception about most of the persons and matters in his work; but, in fact, I do not believe you have. Pray, can you distinguish between his *cock* and *hen* Heghes, and between all Yasouses and Ozo-ros? and do you firmly believe that an old man and his son were sent for and put to death, because the King had run into a thorn-bush, and was forced to leave his clothes behind him? Is it your faith, that one of their Abyssinian Majesties pleaded not being able to contribute towards sending for a new Abuna, because he had spent all his money at Venice in looking-glasses? And do you really think that Peter Paez was a Jack-of-all-trades, and built palaces and convents without assistance, and furnished them with his own hands? You, who are a little apt to contest most assertions, must have strangely let out your credulity!¹ I could put forty questions to you as wonderful; and, for my part, could as soon credit * * * *.

¹ Though Bruce's work was attacked at the time by the critics with much virulence, his statements have been more or less confirmed by Salt, Burckhardt, Witman, Clarke, Belzoni, and other distinguished travellers. Bruce never replied to any of his opponents; but sometimes said to his daughter, that he hoped she would live to see the time when the truth of what he had written would be established. He lost his life in April 1794, in consequence of an accidental slip of his foot, while handing a lady down stairs to her carriage. A second edition of his *Travels* was published in 1805, by Dr. Alexander Murray, from a copy which the traveller had himself prepared for the press.—E.

I am tired of railing at French barbarity and folly. They are more puerile now serious, than when in the long paroxysm of gay levity. Legislators, a senate, to neglect laws, in order to annihilate coats of arms and liveries ! to pull down a King, and set up an Emperor ! They are hastening to establish the tribunal of the prætorian guards ; for the sovereignty, it seems, is not to be hereditary. One view of their Fête of the 14th,¹ I suppose, is to draw money to Paris ; and the consequence will be, that the deputies will return to the provinces drunk with independence and self-importance, and will commit fifty times more excesses, massacres, and devastations, than last year. George Selwyn says, that *Monsieur*, the King's brother, is the only man of rank from whom they cannot take a title.²

How frantically have the French acted, and how rationally the Americans ! But Franklin and Washington were great men. None have appeared yet in France ; and Necker has only returned to make a wretched figure ! He is become as insignificant as his King ; his name is never mentioned, but now and then as disapproving something that is done. Why then does he stay ? Does he wait to strike some great stroke,

¹ The grand federation in the Champ de Mars, on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, thus described by M. Thiers :—" A magnificent amphitheatre, formed at the further extremity, was destined for the national authorities. The King and the president sat beside one another on similar seats. Behind the King was an elevated balcony for the Queen and the court. The ministers were at some distance before from the King, and the deputies ranged on either side. Four hundred thousand spectators occupied the lateral amphitheatres. Sixty thousand armed federalists performed their evolutions in the intermediate space ; and in the centre, upon a base twenty-five feet high, stood the altar of the country. Three hundred priests, in white surplices and tricoloured scarfs, covered the steps, and were to officiate. 'The Bishop of Autun' [afterwards Prince Talleyrand] " began the mass. Divine service over, La Fayette received the orders of the King, who handed to him the form of the oath. La Fayette carried it to the altar. At this moment all the banners waved, every sabre glistened. The general, the army, the president, the deputies, cried ' I swear it.' The King, standing, with his hand outstretched towards the altar, said, ' I, King of the French, swear,' &c. At this moment, the Queen, moved by the general emotion, clasped in her arms the august child, the heir to the throne, and, from the balcony, showed him to the assembled nation. At this moment shouts of joy, attachment, enthusiasm, were addressed to the mother and the child, and all hearts were hers." History of the Revolution, vol. i. p. 155.—E.

² On the 20th of June, a decree, that the titles of duke, count, marquis, viscount, baron, and chevalier should be suppressed, had been carried in the National Assembly by a large majority.—E.

when everything is demolished? His glory, which consisted in being minister though a Protestant, is vanished by the destruction of popery; the honour of which, I suppose, he will scarce assume to himself. I have vented my budget, and now good night! I feel almost as if I could walk up to bed.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, July 3, 1790.

How kind to write the very moment you arrived! but pray do not think that, welcome as your letters are, I would purchase them at the price of any fatigue to you—a proviso I put in already against moments when you may be more weary than by a journey to Lymington. You make me happy by the good accounts of Miss Agnes; and I should be completely so, if the air of the sea could be so beneficial to you both, as to make your farther journey unnecessary to your healths, at least for some time; for—and I protest solemnly that not a personal thought enters into the consideration—I shall be excessively alarmed at your going to the Continent, when such a phrenzy has seized it. You see by the papers, that the flame has burst out at Florence: can Pisa then be secure? Flanders can be no safe road; and is any part of France so? I told you in my last of the horrors at Avignon. At Madrid the people are riotous against the war with us, and prosecuted I am persuaded it will not be; but the demon of Gaul is busy everywhere. The Etats, who are as foolish as atrocious, have printed lists of the surnames which the late noblesse are to assume or resume; as if people did not know their own names. I like a speech I have heard of the Queen. She went with the King to see the manufacture of glass, and, as they passed the Halles, the poissardes huzzaed them; “Upon my word,” said the Queen, “these folks are civiler when you visit them, than when they visit you.” This marked both spirit and good-humour. For my part, I am so shocked at French barbarity, that I begin to think that our hatred of them is not

national prejudice, but natural instinct; as tame animals are born with an antipathy to beasts of prey.

Mrs. Damer tells me in a letter to-day, that Lady Ailesbury was charmed with you both (which did not surprise either of us); and says she never saw two persons have so much taste for the country, who have no place of their own. It may be so; but, begging her ladyship's pardon and yours, I think that people who have a place of their own, are mighty apt not to like any other.

I feel all the kindness at your determination of coming to Twickenham in August, and shall certainly say no more against it, though I am certain that I shall count every day that passes; and when *they are passed*, they will leave a melancholy impression on Strawberry, that I had rather have affixed to London. The two last summers were infinitely the pleasantest I ever passed here, for I never before had an agreeable neighbourhood. Still I loved the place, and had no comparisons to draw. Now, the neighbourhood will remain, and will appear ten times worse; with the aggravation of remembering two months that may have some transient roses, but, I am sure, lasting thorns. You tell me I do not write with my usual spirits: at least I will suppress, as much as I can, the want of them, though I am a bad dissembler.¹

You do not mention the cathedral at Winchester, which I have twice seen and admired; nor do you say anything of Bevismount and Netley—charming Netley! At Lyndhurst you passed the palatial hovel of my royal nephew; who I have reason to wish had never been so, and did all I could to prevent his being.

The week before last I met the Marlboroughs at Lady Di's. The Duchess² desired to come and see Strawberry

¹ In a letter written in this month to Walpole, Miss More asks, "Where and how are the Berrys? I hope they are within reach of your great chair, if you are confined, and of your airings, if you go abroad. I hate their going to Yorkshire; as Hotspur says, 'What do they do in the north, when they ought to be in the south?'" *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 235.—E.

² Lady Caroline Russell; married, in 1762, to the Duke of Marlborough.

again, as it had rained the whole time she was here last. I proposed the next morning: no, she could not; she expected company to dinner; she believed their brother, Lord Robert,¹ would dine with them: I thought that a little odd, as they have just turned him out for Oxfordshire; and I thought a dinner no cause at the distance of four miles. In her grace's dawdling way, she could fix no time: and so on Friday, at half an hour after seven, as I was going to Lady North's, they arrived; and the sun being setting, and the moon not risen, you may judge how much they could see through all the painted glass by twilight.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 9, at night, 1790.

MR. NICHOLLS has offered to be postman to you; *whereof*, though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to say, I thought *as how* it would look kinder to send nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

Nothing the first. So the peace is made, and the stocks drank its health in a bumper; but when they waked the next morning, they found they had reckoned without their host, and that their majesties the King of big Britain and the King of little Spain have agreed to make peace some time or other, if they can agree upon it; and so the stocks drew in their horns: but, having great trust in some time or other, they only fell two pegs lower. I, who never believed there would be war, keep my prophetic stocks up to par, and my consol—ation still higher; for when Spanish pride truckles, and English pride has had the honour of bullying, I dare to say we shall be content with the ostensible triumph, as Spain will be with some secret article that will leave her much where she was before. Vide Falkland's Island.

Nothing the second. Miss Gunning's match with Lord Blandford. You asserted it so peremptorily, that, though I doubted it, I quoted you. Lo! it took its rise solely in

¹ Lord Robert Spencer, brother of the Duke of Marlborough.

poor old Bedford's dotage, that still harps on conjunctions copulative, but now disavows it, as they say, on a remonstrance from her daughter.

Nothing the third. Nothing will come of nothing, says King Lear, and your humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, August 12, 1790.

I MUST not pretend any longer, my dear lord, that this region is void of news and diversions. Oh! we can innovate as well as neighbouring nations. If an Earl Stanhope, though he cannot be a tribune, is ambitious of being a plebeian, he may without a law be as vulgar as heart can wish; and, though we have not a national assembly to lay the axe to the root of nobility, the peerage have got a precedent for laying themselves in the kennel. Last night the Earl of Barrymore was so humble as to perform a buffoon-dance and act Scaramouch in a pantomime at Richmond for the benefit of Edwin, jun. the comedian:¹ and I, like an old fool, but calling myself a philosopher that loves to study human nature in all its disguises, went to see the performance.

Mr. Gray thinks that some Milton or some Cromwell may be lost to the world under the garb of a ploughman. Others may suppose that some excellent jack-pudding may lie hidden under red velvet and ermine. I cannot say that by the experiment of last night the latter hypothesis has been demonstrated, any more than the inverse proposition in France, where, though there seem to be many as bloody-minded rascals as Cromwell, I can discover none of his abilities.²

¹ In the following month "The Follies of a Day" was performed at Lord Barrymore's private theatre, at Wergrave. "His lordship, in the character of the gardener," according to the newspapers, "was highly comic, and his humour was not overstrained: the whole concluded with a dance, in which was introduced a favourite *pas Russe*, by Lord Barrymore and Mr. Delpini, which kept the theatre in a roar."—E.

² Gibbon, in a letter written a few months before from Lausanne to Lord Sheffield, makes the following reflections:—"The French nation

They have settled nothing like a constitution; on the contrary, they seem to protract everything but violence, as much as they can, in order to keep their louis a day, which is more than two-thirds of the Assembly perhaps ever saw in a month. I do not love legislators that pay themselves so amply ! They might have had as good a constitution as twenty-four millions of people could comport. As they have voted an army of an hundred and fifty thousand men, I know what their constitution will be, after passing through a civil war. In short, I detest them: they have done irreparable injury to liberty, for no monarch will ever summon *états* again; and all the real service that will result from their fury will be, that every King in Europe, for these twenty or perhaps thirty years to come, will be content with the prerogative he has, without venturing to augment it.

The Empress of Russia has thrashed the King of Sweden; and the King of Sweden has thrashed the Empress of Russia. I am more glad that both are beaten than that either is victorious; for I do not, like our newspapers, and such admirers, fall in love with heroes and heroines who make war without a glimpse of provocation. I do like *our* making peace, whether we had provocation or not. I am forced to deal in European news, my dear lord, for I have no homespun. I don't think my whole inkhorn could invent another paragraph; and therefore I will take my leave, with (your lordship knows) every kind wish for your health and happiness.¹

had a glorious opportunity, but they have abused and may lose their advantages. If they had been content with a liberal translation of our system, if they had respected the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the nobles, they might have raised a solid fabric on the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a great country. How different is the prospect! Their King brought a captive to Paris, after his palace had been stained with the blood of his guards; the nobles in exile; the clergy plundered in a way which strikes at the root of all property; the capital an independent republic; the union of the provinces dissolved; the flames of discord kindled by the worst of men, and the honestest of the Assembly a set of wild visionaries. As yet there is no symptom of a great man, a Richelieu or a Cromwell, arising, either to restore the monarchy, or to lead the commonwealth."—E.

¹ This appears to have been the last letter addressed by Walpole to the Earl of Strafford. His lordship died at Wentworth Castle, on the 10th of March following, in his seventy-ninth year.—E.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.¹

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 21, 1790.

So many years, Sir, have elapsed since I saw Burleigh, that I cannot in general pretend to recollect the pictures well. I do remember that there was a surfeit of pieces by Luca Jordano and Carlo Dolce, no capital masters, and posterior to the excellent. *The* Earl of Exeter, who resided long at Rome in the time of those two painters, seemed to have employed them entirely during his sojourn there. I was not struck more than you, Sir, with the celebrated Death of Seneca, though one of the best works of Jordano. Perhaps Prior's verses lifted it to part of its fame, though even those verses are inferior to many of that charming poet's compositions. Upon the whole, Burleigh is a noble palace, contains many fine things, and the inside court struck me with admiration and reverence.

The Shakspeare Gallery is truly most inadequate to its prototypes; but how should it be worthy of them! If we could recall the brightest luminaries of painting, could they do justice to Shakspeare? Was Raphael himself as great a genius in his art as the author of Macbeth? and who could draw Falstaffe, but the writer of Falstaffe? I am entirely of your opinion, Sir, that two of Northcote's pictures, from King John and Richard the Third, are at the head of the collection. In Macklin's Gallery of Poets and Scripture, there are much better pictures than at Boydell's. Opie's Jephthah's Vow is a truly fine performance, and would be so in any assemblage of paintings; as Sir Joshua's Death of Beaufort is worthy of none: the Imp is burlesque, and the Cardinal seems terrified at him as before him, when the Imp is behind him. In Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition there is a print that gives the fact simply, pathetically, and with dignity, and just as you wish it told.

My sentiments on French politics concur as much with yours as they do on the subjects above. The National As-

¹ Now first collected.

sembly set out too absurdly and extravagantly, not to throw their country into the last confusion; which is not the way of correcting a government, but more probably of producing a worse, bad as the old was, and thence they will have given a lasting wound to liberty: for what king will ever call *Etats* again, if he can possibly help it? The new legislators were pedants, not politicians, when they announced the equality of all men. We are all born so, no doubt, abstractedly; and physically capable of being kept so, were it possible to establish a perfect government, and give the same education to all men. But are they so in the present constitution of society, under a bad government, where most have had no education at all, but have been debased, brutified, by a long train and mixture of superstition and oppression, and witnesses to the luxury and vices of their superiors, which they could only envy and not enjoy? It was turning tigers loose; and the degradation of the nobility pointed out the prey. Could it be expected that savages so hallooed on to outrage and void of any notions of reciprocal duties and obligations, would fall into a regular system of acting as citizens under the government of reason and justice? It was tearing all the bonds of society, which the experience of mankind had taught them were necessary to the mutual convenience of all; and no provision, no security, was made for those who were levelled, and who, though they enjoyed what they had by the old constitution, were treated, or were exposed to be treated, as criminals. They have been treated so: several have been butchered; and the National Assembly dare not avenge them, as they should lose the favour of the intoxicated populace. That conduct was senseless, or worse. With no less folly did they seem to expect that a vast body of men, more enlightened, at least, than the gross multitude, would sit down in patience under persecution and deprivation of all they valued; I mean the nobility and clergy, who might be stunned, but were sure of reviving and of burning with vengeance. The insult was the greater, as the subsequent conduct of the National Assembly has proved more shamefully dishonest, in their paying themselves daily more than two-thirds of them ever saw perhaps in

a month ; and that flagitious self-bestowed stipend, as it is void of all patriotic integrity, will destroy their power too ; for, if constitution-making is so lucrative a trade, others will wish to share in the plunder of their country too ; and, even without a civil war, I am persuaded the present Assembly will neither be septennial, nor even triennial.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Sunday, Oct. 10, 1790. The day of your departure.

Is it possible to write to my beloved friends, and refrain from speaking of my grief for losing you ; though it is but the continuation of what I have felt ever since I was stunned by your intention of going abroad this autumn ? Still I will not tire you with it often. In happy days I smiled, and called you my dear wives—now I can only think on you as darling children of whom I am bereaved ! As such I have loved and do love you ; and, charming as you both are, I have had no occasion to remind myself that I am past seventy-three. Your hearts, your understandings, your virtues, and the cruel injustice of your fate,¹ have interested me in everything that concerns you ; and so far from having occasion to blush for any unbecoming weakness, I am proud of my affection for you, and very proud of your condescending to pass so many hours with a very old man, when everybody admires you, and the most insensible allow that your good sense and information (I speak of both) have formed you to converse with the most intelligent of our sex as well as your own ; and neither can tax you with airs of pretension or affectation. Your simplicity and natural ease set off all your other merits—all these graces are lost to me, alas ! when I have no time to lose.

Sensible as I am to my loss, it will occupy but part of my thoughts, till I know you safely landed, and arrived safely at Turin. Not till you are there, and I learn so, will my anxiety

¹ This alludes to Miss Berry's father having been disinherited by an uncle, to whom he was heir at law, and a large property left to his younger brother.—M. B.

subside and settle into steady, selfish sorrow. I looked at every weather-cock as I came along the road to-day, and was happy to see every one point north-east. May they do so to-morrow !

I found here the frame for Wolsey, and to-morrow morning Kirgate will place him in it; and then I shall begin pulling the little parlour to pieces, that it may be hung anew to receive him. I have also obeyed Miss Agnes, though with regret; for, on trying it, I found her *Arcadia*¹ would fit the place of the picture she condemns, which shall therefore be hung in its room; though the latter should give way to nothing else, nor shall be laid aside, but shall hang where I shall see it almost as often. I long to hear that its dear paintress is well; I thought her not at all so last night. You will tell me the truth, though she in her own case, and in that alone, allows herself mental reservation.

Forgive me for writing nothing to-night but about you two and myself. Of what can I have thought else? I have not spoken to a single person but my own servants since we parted last night. I found a message here from Miss Howe² to invite me for this evening—do you think I have not preferred staying at home to write to you, as this must go to London to-morrow morning by the coach to be ready for Tuesday's post? My future letters shall talk of other things, whenever I know anything worth repeating; or perhaps any trifle, for I am determined to forbid myself lamentations that would weary you; and the frequency of my letters will prove there is no forgetfulness. If I live to see you again, you will then judge whether I am changed; but a friendship so rational and so pure as mine is, and so equal for both, is not likely to have any of the fickleness of youth, when it has none of its other ingredients. It was a sweet consolation to the short time that I may have left, to fall into such a society; no wonder then that I am unhappy at that consolation being abridged. I pique myself on no philosophy, but what a long use and knowledge of the world had given me—the philosophy of in-

¹ A drawing by Miss Agnes Berry.

² Julia Howe, an unmarried sister of Admiral Earl Howe, who lived at Richmond.

difference to most persons and events. I do pique myself on not being ridiculous at this very late period of my life; but when there is not a grain of passion in my affection for you two, and when you both have the good sense not to be displeased at my telling you so, (though I hope you would have despised me for the contrary,) I am not ashamed to say that your loss is heavy to me; and that I am only reconciled to it by hoping that a winter in Italy, and the journeys and sea air, will be very beneficial to two constitutions so delicate as yours. Adieu! my dearest friends: it would be tautology to subscribe a name to a letter, every line of which would suit no other man in the world but the writer.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Sunday, Oct. 31, 1790.

PERHAPS I am unreasonably impatient, and expect letters before they can come. I expected a letter from Lyons three days ago, though Mrs. Damer told me I should not have one till to-morrow. I have got one to-day; but alas! from Pougues only, eleven and a half posts short of Lyons! Oh! may Mrs. Damer prove in the right to-morrow! Well! I must be happy for the past; and that you had such delightful weather, and but one little accident to your carriage. We have had equal summer till Wednesday last, when it blew a hurricane. I said to it, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind, I don't mind you now!" but I have not forgotten Tuesday the 12th; and now I hope it will be as calm as it is to-day on Wednesday next, when Mrs. Damer is to sail.¹ I was in town on Thursday and Friday, and so were her parents, to take our leaves; as we did on Friday night, supping all at Richmond-house. She set out yesterday morning, and I returned hither. I am glad you had the amusement of seeing the National Assembly. Did Mr. Berry find it quite so august as he intended it should be? Burke's pamphlet is to appear to-morrow, and

¹ Mrs. Damer was going to pass the winter at Lisbon, on account of her health.

Calonne has published a thumping one of four hundred and forty pages.¹ I have but begun it, for there is such a quantity of calculations, and one is forced to bait so often to boil millions of livres down to a rob of pounds sterling, that my head is only filled with figures instead of arguments, and I understand arithmetic less than logic.

Our war still hangs by a hair, they say; and that this approaching week must terminate its fluctuations. Brabant, I am told, is to be pacified by negociations at the Hague. Though I talk like a newspaper, I do not assume their airs; nor give my intelligence of any sort for authentic, unless when the Gazette endorses the articles. Thus, Lord Louvain is made Earl of Beverley, and Lord, Earl of Digby; but in no Gazette, though still in the Songs of Sion, do I find that Miss Gunning is a marchioness. It is not that I suppose you care who gains a step in the aristocracy; but I tell you these trifles to keep you *au courant*, and that at your return you may not make only a baronial curtsey, when it should be lower by two rows of ermine to some new-hatched countess. This is all the news-market furnishes.

Your description of the National Assembly and of the Champ de Mars were both admirable; but the altar of boards and canvass seems a type of their perishable constitution, as their air-balloons were before. French visions are generally full of vapour, and terminate accordingly. I have been at Mrs. Grenville's² this evening, who had a small party for the Duchess of Gloucester: there were many inquiries after *my wives*.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Park-place, Nov. 8, 1790.

No letter since Pougues! I think you can guess how uneasy I am! It is not the fault of the wind; which has

¹ This was his "Lettre sur l'Etat de la France, présent et à venir;" of which a translation appeared in the following year.—E.

² Margaret Banks, widow of the Hon. Henry Grenville, who died in 1784. Their only daughter was married, in 1781, to Viscount Mahon, afterwards Earl Stanhope.

blown from every quarter. To-day I cannot hear, for no post comes in on Mondays. What can have occasioned my receiving no letter from Lyons, when, on the 18th of last month, you were within twelve posts of it? I am now sorry I came hither, lest by my change of place a letter may have shuttlecocked about, and not have known where to find me; and yet I left orders with Kirgate to send it after me, if one came to Strawberry on Saturday. I return thither to-morrow, but not till after the post is come in here. I am writing to you now, while the company are walked out, to divert my impatience; which, however, is but a bad recipe, and not exactly the way to put you out of my head.

The first and great piece of news is the pacification with Spain. The courier arrived on Thursday morning with a most acquiescent answer to our ultimatum: what that was I do not know, nor much care. Peace contents me, and for my part I shall not haggle about the terms. I have a good general digestion, and it is not a small matter that will lie at my stomach when I have no hand in dressing the ingredients.

The pacification of Brabant is likely to be volume the second. The Emperor, and their Majesties of Great Britain and Prussia, and his Serene Highness the Republic of Holland have sent a card to his turbulent Lowness of Brabant, that they allow him but three weeks to submit to his old sovereign; on promise of a general pardon—or the choice of threescore thousand men ready to march without a pardon.

The third volume, expected, but not yet in the press, is a counter-revolution in France. Of that I know nothing but rumour; yet it certainly is not the most incredible event that rumour ever foretold. In this country the stock of the National Assembly is fallen down to bankruptcy. Their only renegade, aristocrat Earl Stanhope, has, with D. W. Russel, scratched his name out of the Revolution Club; but the fatal blow has been at last given by Mr. Burke. His pamphlet¹ came out this day se'nnight, and is far superior to what was

¹ The far-famed "Reflections on the Revolution in France;" of which about thirty thousand copies were sold in a comparatively short space of time.—E.

expected, even by his warmest admirers. I have read it twice; and though of three hundred and fifty pages, I wish I could repeat every page by heart. It is sublime, profound, and gay. The wit and satire are equally brilliant; and the whole is wise, though in some points he goes too far: yet in general there is far less want of judgment than could be expected from *him*. If it could be translated,—which, from the wit and metaphors and allusions, is almost impossible,—I should think it would be a classic book in all countries, except in *present* France.¹ To their tribunes it speaks daggers; though, unlike them, it uses none. Seven thousand copies have been taken off by the booksellers already, and a new edition is preparing. I hope you will see it soon. There ends my gazette.

There is nobody here at present but Mrs. Hervey, Mrs. E. Hervey, and Mrs. Cotton: but what did I find on Saturday? Why, the Prince of Furstemberg,² his son, and son's governor! I was ready to turn about and go back; but they really proved not at all unpleasant. The ambassador has not the least German stiffness or hauteur; is extremely civil, and so domestic a man, that he talked comfortably of his wife and eight children, and of his fondness for them. He understands English, though he does not speak it. The son, a good-humoured lad of fifteen, seems well-informed: the governor, a middle-aged officer, speaks English so perfectly, that even by his accent I should not have discovered him for a foreigner. They stayed all night, and went to Oxford next morning before I rose.

November 9th, at night.

This morning, before I left Park-place, I had the relief and joy of receiving your letter of October 24, from Lyons. It would have been still more welcome, if dated from Turin;

¹ A French translation, by M. Dupont, shortly after made its appearance, and spread the reputation of the work over all Europe. The Emperor of Germany, Catherine of Russia, and the French Princes transmitted to Mr. Burke their warm approbation of it, and the unfortunate Stanislaus of Poland sent him his likeness on a gold medal.—E.

² The Landgrave of Furstemberg had been sent from the Emperor Leopold to notify his being elected King of the Romans, and his subsequent coronation as Emperor of Germany.—E.

but, as you have met with no impediments so far, I trust you got out of France as well as through it. I do hope, too, that Miss Agnes is better, as you say; but when one is very anxious about a person, credulity does not take long strides in proportion. I am not surprised at your finding *voiturins*, or anybody, or anything, dearer: where all credit and all control are swept away, every man will be a tyrant in proportion to his necessities and his strength. Societies were invented to temperate force: but it seems force was liberty, and much good may it do the French with being delivered from everything but violence!—which I believe they will soon taste *pro* and *con*.! You make me smile by desiring me to continue my affection. Have I so much time left for inconstancy? For three-score years and ten I have not been very fickle in my friendships: in all those years I never found such a pair as you and your sister. Should I meet with a superior pair,—but they must not be deficient in any one of the qualities which I find in you two,—why, perhaps, I may change; but, with that double mortgage on my affections, I do not think you are in much danger of losing them. You shall have timely notice if a second couple drops out of the clouds and falls in my way.

TO MISS BERRY.

November 11, 1790.

I HAD a letter from Mrs. Damer at Falmouth. She suffered much by cold and fatigue, and probably sailed on Saturday evening last, and may be at Lisbon by this time, as you, I trust, are in Italy.

Mr. Burke's pamphlet has quite turned Dr. Price's head. He got upon a table at their club, toasted to our Parliament becoming a National Assembly, and to admitting no more peers of their assembly, having lost the only one they had. They themselves are very like the French *Etats*: two more members got on the table (their pulpit), and broke it down:—so be it!

The Marquisate¹ is just where it was—to be and not to be. The Duchess of Argyll is said to be worse. Della Crusca² has published a poem, called “The Laurel of Liberty,” which, like the Enragés, has confounded and overturned all ideas. There are *gossamery tears* and *silky oceans*—the first time, to be sure, that anybody ever *cried cobwebs*, or that the *sea* was made of *paduasoy*.³ There is, besides, a violent tirade against a considerable personage, who, it is supposed, the author was jealous of, as too much favoured a few years ago by a certain Countess. You may guess why I am not more explicit: for the same reason I beg you not to mention it at all; it would be exceedingly improper. As the Parliament will meet in a fortnight, and the town be plumper, my letters may grow more amusing; though, unless the weather grows worse, I shall not contribute my leanness to its *embonpoint*. Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday, Nov. 18, 1790.

ON Tuesday morning, after my letter was gone to the post, I received yours of the 2d (as I have all the rest) from Turin, and it gave me very little of the joy I had so much meditated to receive from a letter thence. And why did not it?—because I had got one on Saturday, which anticipated and augmented all the satisfaction I had allotted for Turin.

¹ Meaning the reported marriage of Miss Gunning to the Marquis of Blandford.—B.

² Robert Merry, Esq. who, at this time, wrote in the newspapers under this signature, and thereby became the object of the caustic satire of the author of the Baviad and Mæviad —

“Lo, Della Crusca! in his closet pent,
He toils to give the crude conception vent:
Abortive thoughts, that right and wrong confound,
Truth sacrific’d to letters, sense to sound;
False glare, incongruous images combine,
And noise and nonsense clatter through the line.”—E.

³ Besides the above, Mr. Gifford instances, from the same poem, “moody monarchs, radiant rivers, cooling cataracts, lazy Loires, gay Garonnes, glossy glass, mingling murder, dauntless day, lettered lightnings, delicious dilatings, sinking sorrows, real reasoning, meliorating mercies, dewy vapours damp that sweep the silent swamps, &c. &c.”—E.

You will find my Tuesday's letter, if ever you receive it, intoxicated with Chambrery; for which, and all your kind punctuality, I give you a million of thanks. But how cruel to find that you found none of my letters at Turin! There ought to have been two at least, of October the 16th and 19th. I have since directed one thither of the 25th; but, alas! from ignorance, there was *par Paris* on none of them; and the Lord knows at how many little German courts they may have been baiting! I shall put *par Paris* on this; but beg you will tell me, as soon as you can, which route is the shortest and the safest; that is, by which you are most likely to receive them. You do me justice in concluding there has been no negligence of mine in the case; indeed, I have been ashamed at the multiplicity of my letters, when I had scarce anything to tell you but my own anxiety to hear of your being quietly settled at Florence, out of the reach of all commotions. And how could I but dread your being molested by some accident, in the present state of France? and how could your healths mend in bad inns, and till you can repose somewhere? Repose you will have at Florence, but I shall fear the winter for you there: I suffered more by cold there, than by any place in my life; and never came home at night without a pain in my breast, which I never felt elsewhere, yet then I was very young and in perfect health. If either of you suffer there in any shape, I hope you will retire to Pisa.

My inquietude, that presented so many alarms to me before you set out, has, I find, and am grieved for it, not been quite in the wrong. Some inconveniences I am persuaded you have sunk: yet the difficulty of landing at Dieppe, and the ransack of your poor harmless trunks at Bourgoïn, and the wretched lodgings with which you were forced to take up at Turin, count deeply with me; and I had much rather have lost all credit as a prophet, since I could not prevent your journey. May it answer for your healths! I doubt it will not in any other respect, as you have already found by the *voiturins*. In point of pleasure, is it possible to divest myself so radically of all self-love as to wish you may find Italy

as agreeable as you did formerly? In all other lights, I do most fervently hope there will be no drawbacks on your plan. Should you be disappointed any way, you know what a warm heart is open to receive you back; and so will *your own* Cliveden¹ be too.

I am glad you met the Bishop of Arras,² and am much pleased that he remembers me. I saw him very frequently at my dear old friend's,³ and liked him the best of all the Frenchmen I ever knew. He is extremely sensible, easy, lively, and void of prejudices. Should he fall in your way again, I beg you will tell him how sincere a regard I have for him. He lived in the strictest union with his brother, the Archbishop of Tours, whom I was much less acquainted with, nor know if he be living.

I have heard nothing since my Tuesday's letter. As I still hope its predecessors will reach you, I will not repeat the trifling scraps of news I have sent you in them. In fact, this is only a trial whether *par Paris* is a better passport than a direction without it; but I am grievously sorry to find difficulty of correspondence superadded to the vexation of losing you. Writing to you was grown my chief occupation. I wish Europe and its broils were in the East Indies, if they embarrass us quiet folks, who have nothing to do with their squabbles. The Duchess of Gloucester, who called on me yesterday, charged me to give her compliments to you both. Miss Foldson⁴ has not yet sent me your pictures: I was in town on Monday, and sent to reproach her with having twice broken her promise; her mother told my servant that Miss was at Windsor, drawing the Queen and Princesses. That is not the work of a moment. I am glad *all* the Princes are not on the spot.

I think of continuing here till the weather grows very bad; which it has not been at all yet, though not equal to what I am rejoiced you have found. I have no Somerset or

¹ Little Strawberry Hill, which he had then thus named.

² M. de Conzies. This amiable prelate declined, in 1801, the Parisian archiepiscopacy, proffered him by Buonaparte, and died in London, in December 1804, in the arms of Monsieur, afterwards Charles the Tenth.

—E.

³ Madame du Deffand.

⁴ Afterwards Mrs. Mee.

Audley street to receive me; Mrs. Damer is gone too. The Conways remain at Park-place till after Christmas; it is entirely out of fashion for women to grow old and stay at home in an evening. They invite you, indeed, now and then, but do not expect to see you till midnight; which is rather too late to begin the day, unless one was born but twenty years ago. I do not condemn any fashions, which the young ought to set, for the old certainly ought not; but an oak that has been going on in its old way for an hundred years, cannot shoot into a May-pole in three years, because it is the mode to plant Lombardy poplars.

What I should have suffered, if your letters, like mine, had wandered through Germany! I, you was sure, had written, and was in no danger. Dr. Price, who had whetted his ancient talons last year to no purpose, has had them all drawn by Burke, and the Revolution Club is as much exploded as the Cock-lane Ghost; but you, in order to pass a quiet winter in Italy, *would* pass through a fiery furnace. Fortunately, you have not been singed, and the letter from Chamberry has composed all my panics, but has by no means convinced me that I was not perfectly in the right to endeavour to keep you at home. One does not put one's hand in the fire to burn off a hangnail; and, though health is delightful, neither of you were out of order enough to make a rash experiment. I would not be so absurd as to revert to old arguments, that happily proved no prophecies, if my great anxiety about you did not wish, in time, to persuade you to return through Switzerland and Flanders, if the latter is pacified and France is not; of which I see no likelihood.

Pray forgive me, if parts of my letters are sometimes tiresome; but can I appear only and always cheerful when you two are absent, and have another long journey to make, ay, and the sea to cross again? My fears cannot go to sleep like a paroli at faro till there is a new deal, in which even then I should not be sure of winning. If I see you again, I will think I have gained another milleleva, as I literally once did; with this exception, that I was vehemently against risking a doit at the game of travelling. Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, Nov. 27, 1790.

I AM waiting for a letter from Florence, not with perfect patience, though I could barely have one, even if you did arrive, as you intended, on the 12th; but twenty temptations might have occurred to detain you in that land of eye and ear sight: my chief eagerness is to learn that you have received at least some of my letters. I wish too to know, though I cannot yet, whether you would have me direct *par Paris*, or as I did before. In this state of uncertainty I did not prepare this to depart this morning; nor, though the Parliament met yesterday, have I a syllable of news for you, as there will be no debate till all the members have been sworn, which takes two or three days. Moreover, I am still here: the weather, though very rainy, is quite warm; and I have much more agreeable society at Richmond, with small companies and better hours, than in town, and shall have till after Christmas, unless great cold drives me thither. Lady Di, Selwyn, the Penns, the Onslows, Douglasses, Mackinsys, Keenes, Lady Mount-Edgcumbe, all stay, and some of them meet every evening. The Boufflers too are constantly invited, and the Comtesse Emilie sometimes carries her harp, on which they say she plays better than Orpheus; but as I never heard him on earth, nor *chez Proserpine*, I do not pretend to decide. Lord Fitzwilliam¹ has been here too; but was in the utmost danger of being lost on Saturday night, in a violent storm between Calais and Dover, as the captain confessed to him when they were landed. Do you think I did not ache at the recollection of a certain Tuesday when you were sailing to Dieppe?

TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Nov. 29, 1790.

THOUGH I write to both at once, and reckon your letters to come equally from both, yet I delight in seeing your hand

¹ Richard, seventh and last Viscount Fitzwilliam, the munificent benefactor to the University of Cambridge. He died in 1816.—E.

with a pen as well as with a pencil, and you express yourself as well with the one as with the other. Your part in that which I have been so happy as to receive this moment, has singularly obliged me, by your having saved me the terror of knowing you had a torrent to cross after heavy rain. No cat is so afraid of water for herself, as I am grown to be for you. That panic, which will last for many months, adds to my fervent desire of your returning early in the autumn, that you may have neither fresh water nor the “silky” ocean to cross in winter. Precious as our insular situation is, I am ready to wish with the Frenchman, that you could somehow or other get to it by land,—“Oui, c’est une isle toujours, je le sçais bien; mais, par exemple, en allant d’alentour, n’y auroit-il pas moyen d’y arriver par terre?”

Correggio never pleased me in proportion to his fame: his grace touches upon grimace; the mouth of the beautiful Angel at Parma curls up almost into a half-moon. Still I prefer Correggio to the *lourd* want of grace in Guercino, who is to me a German edition of Guido. I am sorry the bookseller would not let you have an Otranto. Edwards told me, above two months ago, that he every day expected the whole impression; and he has never mentioned it waiting for my corrections. I will make Kirgate write to him, for I have told you that I am still here. We have had much rain, but no flood; and yesterday and to-day have exhibited Florentine skies.

From town I know nothing; but that on Friday, after the King’s speech, Earl Stanhope made a most frantic speech on the National Assembly and against Calonne’s book, which he wanted to have taken up for high treason.¹ He was every minute interrupted by loud bursts of laughter; which was all the answer he received or deserved. His suffragan Price has

¹ In the report of Lord Stanhope’s speech, as it is given in the Parliamentary History, there is no expression of a wish that M. Calonne should be “taken up for high treason.” What the noble Earl said was, that the assertion that a civil war would meet with the support of all the crowned heads in Europe, was a scandalous libel on the King of England, and might endanger the lives of many natives of Scotland and Ireland then residing in France.—E.

published a short sneaking equivocal answer to Burke, in which he pretends his triumph over the King of France alluded to July, not to October, though his sermon was preached in November. *Credat* — but not *Judæus Apella*, as Mr. Burke so wittily says of the assignats.¹ Mr. Grenville, the secretary of state, is made a peer, they say to assist the Chancellor in the House of Lords: yet the papers pretend the Chancellor is out of humour, and will resign; the first may be true, the latter probably not.²

Richmond, my metropolis, flourishes exceedingly. The Duke of Clarence arrived at his palace there last night, between eleven and twelve, as I came from Lady Douglas. His eldest brother and Mrs. Fitzherbert dine there to-day with the Duke of Queensbury, as his grace, who called here this morning, told me, on the very spot where lived Charles the First, and where are the portraits of his principal courtiers from Cornbury. Queensbury has taken to that palace at last, and has frequently company and music there in an evening. I intend to go.

I suppose none of my Florentine acquaintance are still upon earth. The handsomest woman there, of my days, was a Madame Grifoni, *my* fair Geraldine: she would now be a Methusalemess, and much more like a frightful picture I have of her by a one-eyed German painter. I lived then with Sir Horace Mann, in Casa Mannetti in Via de' Santi Apostoli, by the Ponte di Trinità. Pray, worship the works of Masaccio, if any remain; though I think the best have been burnt in a church. Raphael himself borrowed from him. Fra Bartolomeo, too, is one of my standards for great ideas; and Benvenuto Cellini's Perseus a rival of the antique, though

¹ "The Assembly made in their speeches a sort of swaggering declaration, something, I rather think, above legislative competence; that is, that there is no difference in value between metallic money and their assignats. This was a good, stout proof article of faith, pronounced under an anathema, by the venerable fathers of this philosophic synod. *Credat* who will — certainly not *Judæus Apella*."—E.

² In Mr. Wilberforce's Diary for this year there appears the following entry:—"Nov. 22. Dined with Mr. Pitt. He told me of Grenville's peerage, and the true reasons—distrust of Lord Thurlow. Saw Thurlow's answer to the news. Gave Pitt a serious word or two." See Life, vol. i. p. 284.—E.

Mrs. Damer will not allow it. Over against the Perseus is a beautiful small front of a house, with only three windows, designed by Raphael; and another, I think, near the Porta San Gallo, and I believe called Casa Panciatici or Pandolfini.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 20, 1790 ; very late at night.

THE French packet that was said to be lost on Tuesday last, and which did hang out signals of distress, was saved, but did not bring any letters; but three Flemish mails that were due are arrived, and did bring letters, and, to my inexpressible joy, two from you of the 22nd and 29th of last month, telling me that you have received as far as No. 4 and 5 of mine. Thank all the stars in Herschell's telescope, or beyond its reach, that our correspondence is out of the reach of France and all its ravages! Thank you a million of times for all your details about yourselves! When even the apprehension of any danger disquiets me so much, judge whether I do not interest myself in every particular of your pleasures and amusements! Florence was my delight, as it is yours; but, I don't know how, I wish you did not like it quite so much! and, after the gallery, how will any silver-penny of a gallery look? Indeed, for your Boboli, which I thought horrible even fifty years ago, before shepherds had seen the star of taste in the west, and glad tidings were proclaimed to their flocks, I do think there is not an acre on the banks of the Thames that should veil the bonnet to it.

Of Mr. Burke's book, if I have not yet told you my opinion, I do now; that it is one of the finest compositions in print. There is reason, logic, wit, truth, eloquence, and enthusiasm in the brightest colours. That it has given a mortal stab to sedition, I believe and hope; because the fury of the Brabanters,—whom, however, as having been aggrieved, I pitied and distinguish totally from the savage Gauls,—and the unmitigated and execrable injustices of the latter, have made almost any state preferable to such anarchy and desolation, that in-

creases every day. Admiring thus, as I do, I am very far from subscribing to the extent of almost all Mr. Burke's principles. The work, I have no doubt, will hereafter be applied to support very high doctrines; and to you I will say, that I think it an Apocrypha, that, in many a council of Bishops, will be added to the Old Testament. Still, such an Almanzor was wanting at this crisis; and his foes show how deeply they are wounded, by their abusive pamphlets. Their Amazonian allies, headed by Kate Macaulay¹ and the virago Barbauld, whom Mr. Burke calls our *poissardes*, spit their rage at eighteen-pence a head, and will return to Fleet-ditch, more fortunate in being forgotten than their predecessors, immortalized in the Dunciad. I must now bid you good-night; and night it is, to the tune of morning. Adieu, all three!

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Saturday, Jan. 22, 1791.

I HAVE been most unwillingly forced to send you such bad accounts of myself by my two last letters; but, as I could not conceal all, it was best to tell you the whole truth. Though I do not know that there was any real danger, I could not be so blind to my own age and weakness as not to think that, with so much gout and fever, the conclusion might very probably be fatal; and therefore it was better you should be prepared for what might happen. The danger appears to be entirely over: there seems to be no more gout to come. I have no fever, have a very good appetite, and sleep well. Mr. Watson,² who is all tenderness and attention, is persuaded to-day that I shall recover the use of my left hand; of which I despaired much more than of the right, as having been seized three weeks earlier. Emaciated and altered I am incredibly, as you would find were you ever to see me again. But this illness has dispelled all visions; and, as I have little

¹ A pamphlet, entitled "Observations on the Reflections of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke on the Revolution in France; in a Letter to Earl Stanhope," was attributed to Mrs. Macaulay.—E.

² His surgeon.

prospect of passing another happy autumn, I must wean myself from whatever would embitter my remaining time by disappointments.

Your No. 15 came two days ago, and gives me the pleasure of knowing that you both are the better for riding, which I hope you will continue. I am glad, too, that you are pleased with your Duchess of Fleury and your Latin professor; but I own, except your climate and the six hundred camels, you seem to me to have met with no treasure which you might not have found here without going twenty miles: and even the camels, according to Soame Jenyns' spelling, were to be had from Carrick and other places.

I doubt you apply 'Tully de Amicitia too favourably: at least, I fear there is no paragraph that countenances 73 and 27. •

Monday, the 24th.

I think I shall give you pleasure by telling you that I am very sure now of recovering from the present fit. It has almost always happened to me, in my considerable fits of the gout, to have one critical night that celebrates its departure: at the end of two different fits I each time slept eleven hours. Morpheus is not quite so young nor so generous now; but, with the interruption of a few minutes, he presented me with eight hours last night: and thence I shall date my recovery. I shall now begin to let in a little company; and, as the Parliament will meet in a week, my letters will probably not be so dull as they have been; nor shall I have occasion, nor be obliged, to talk so much of myself, of which I am sure others must be tired, when I am so much tired myself.

Tuesday, the 25th.

Old Mrs. French¹ is dead at last, and I am on the point of losing, or have lost, my oldest acquaintance and friend, George Selwyn, who was yesterday at the extremity. These misfortunes, though they can be so but for a short time, are very sensible to the old; but him I really loved, not only for

¹ An Irish lady, who, during the latter part of her life, had a country house at Hampton Court.

his infinite wit, but for a thousand good qualities. Lady Cecilia Johnstone was here yesterday. I said much for you, and she as much to you. The Gunnings are still playing the fool, and perhaps somebody with them; but I cannot tell you the particulars now. Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Saturday, Jan. 29, 1791.

Voici de ma propre écriture! the best proof that I am recovering, though not rapidly, which is not the march of my time of life. For these last six days I have mended more than I expected. My left hand, the first seized, is the most dilatory, and of which I have least hopes. The rheumatism, that I thought so clear and predominant, is so entirely gone, that I now rather think it was hussar-gout attacking in flying squadrons the outposts. No matter which, very ill I was; and you might see what I thought of myself: nor can I stand many such victories. My countenance was so totally altered, that I could not trace it myself. Its outlines have returned to their posts, though with deep gaps. This is a true picture, and too long an one of self; and too hideous for a bracelet. Apropos, your sweet Miss Foldson, I believe, is painting portraits of *all* our Princesses, to be sent to all the Princes upon earth; for, though I have sent her several written duns, she has not deigned even to answer one in writing. I don't know whether Mrs. Buller is not appointed Royal Academician too; for, though I desired the "Charming-man," who was to dine with her that day, to tell her, above a week ago, that I should be glad to see her, she has not taken the least notice of it. Mr. Batt, ditto; who was at Cambridge's when I was at the worst, and knew so, has not once inquired after me, in town or country. So you see you have carried off your friends from me as well as yourselves: and it is not *them* I regret; or rather, in fact, I outlive all my friends! Poor Selwyn is gone, to my sorrow; and no wonder Ucalegon feels it!¹ He

¹ This celebrated wit and amiable man died on the 25th of January,

has left about thirty thousand pounds to Mademoiselle Fagniani; ¹ twenty of which, if she has no children, to go to those of Lord Carlisle: the Duke of Queensberry residuary legatee. Old French has died as foolishly as she lived, and left six thousand pounds to you don't know whom; but to be raised out of her judicious collection of trumpery pictures, &c.

Pray, delight in the following story: Caroline Vernon, *fille d'honneur*, lost t'other night two hundred pounds at faro, and bade Martindale mark it up. He said he had rather have a draft on her banker. "Oh! willingly;" and she gave him one. Next morning he hurried to Drummond's, lest all her money should be drawn out. "Sir," said the clerk, "would you receive the contents immediately?" "Assuredly." "Why, Sir, have you read the note?" Martindale took it; it was, "Pay to the bearer two hundred blows, well applied." The nymph tells the story herself; and yet I think the clerk had the more humour of the two.

The Gunninghiad² draws to a conclusion. The General, a few weeks ago, to prove the equality of his daughter to any match, literally put into the newspapers, that he himself is the thirty-second descendant in a line from Charlemagne;—*oui, vraiment!* Yet he had better have, like Prior's Madam,

"To cut things short, gone up to Adam."

in his seventy-second year. He was member for Luggershall, surveyor-general of the crown lands, surveyor of the meltings and clerk of the irons in the Mint; "and," add the newspapers of the day, "receiver-general of waif and stray jokes." The following tribute to his memory appeared at the time:—

"If, this gay Fav'rite lost, they yet can live,
A tear to Selwyn let the Graces give!
With rapid kindness teach Oblivion's pall
O'er the sunk foibles of the man to fall;
And fondly dictate to a faithful Muse
The prime distinction of the Friend they lose:—
'Twas Social Wit; which, never kindling strife,
Blaz'd in the small, sweet courtesies of life;
Those little sapphires round the diamond shone,
Lending soft radiance to the richer stone."—E.

¹ Married, in 1798, to the Earl of Yarmouth; who, in 1822, succeeded his father as third Marquis of Hertford.—E.

² Meaning the strange, imagined history of a marriage supposed to have been likely to take place between Miss Gunning and the Marquis of Blandford.

However, this Carlovingian hero does not allow that the letters are forgeries, and rather suspects the novelist, his lady,¹ for the authoress; and if she is, probably Miss Charlemagne is not quite innocent of the plot: though she still maintains that her mother-in-law elect did give her much encouragement; which, considering her grace's conduct about her children, is not the most incredible part of this strange story. I have written this at twice, and will now rest.

Sunday evening.

I wish that complaining of people for abandoning me were an infallible recipe for bringing them *back*! but I doubt it will not do in acute cases. To-day, a few hours after writing the latter part of this, appeared Mr. Batt. He asked many pardons, and I easily forgave him; for the *mortification* was not begun. He asked much after you both. I had a crowd of visits besides; but they all come past two o'clock, and sweep one another away before any can take root. My evenings are solitary enough, for I ask nobody to come; nor, indeed, does anybody's evening begin till I am going to bed. I have outlived daylight, as well as my cotemporaries. What have I not survived? The Jesuits and the monarchy of France! and both without a struggle! Semiramis seems to intend to add Constantinople to the mass of revolutions; but is not her permanence almost as wonderful as the contrary explosions! I wish—I wish we may not be actually flippancying ourselves into an embroil with that Ursa-major of the North Pole. What a vixen little island are we, if we fight with the Aurora Borealis and Tippoo Saib at the end of Asia at the same time! You, damsels, will be like the end of the conundrum,

“ You've seen the man who saw these wondrous sights.”

Monday evening.

I cannot finish this with my own hand, for the gout has returned a little into my right arm and wrist, and I am not

¹ Mrs. Gunning was a Miss Minifie, of Fairwater, Somersetshire, and before her marriage had published several popular novels.—E.

quite so well as I was yesterday ; but I had said my say, and have little to add. The Duchess of Gordon, t'other night, coming out of an assembly, said to Dundas, " Mr. Dundas, you are used to speak in public ; will you call my servant ? "

Here I receive your long letter of the 7th, 9th, and 10th, which it is impossible for me to answer now : there is one part to which I wish to reply, but must defer till next post, by which time I hope to have recovered my own pen. You ask about the house of Argyll. You know I have no connexion with them, nor any curiosity about them. Their relations and mine have been in town but four days, so I know little from them : Mrs. Grenville, to-day, told me the Duke proposes to continue the same life he used to lead, with a cribbage-table and his family. Everybody admires the youngest daughter's¹ person and understanding. Adieu ! I will begin to write again myself as soon as I can.

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Friday, Feb. 4, 1791.

LAST post I sent you as cheerful a letter as I could, to convince you that I was recovering. This will be less gay ; not because I have had a little return in both arms, but because I have much more pain in my mind than in my limbs. I see and thank you for all the kindness of your intention ; but, as it has the contrary effect from what you expect, I am forced, for my own peace, to beseech you not to continue a manœuvre that only tantalizes and wounds me. In your last you put together many friendly words to give me hopes of your return ; but can I be so blind as not to see that they are vague words ? Did you mean to return in autumn, would you not say so ? would the most artful arrangement of words be so kind as those few simple ones ? In fact, I have for some time seen how little you mean it ; and, for your sakes, I cease to desire it. The pleasure you expressed

¹ Lady Charlotte-Susan-Maria ; married, first to Colonel John Campbell of Islay, and secondly to the Rev. Mr. Bury.—E.

at seeing Florence again, forgive me for saying, is the joy of sight merely; for can a little Italian town, and wretched Italian company, and travelling English lads and governors, be comparable to the choice of the best company of so vast a capital as London, unless you have taken an aversion to England? And your renewed transports at a less and still more insipid town, Pisa! These plainly told me your thoughts, which vague words cannot efface. You then dropped that you could let your London house till next Christmas, and then talked of a visit to Switzerland, and since all this, Mrs. Damer has warned me not to expect you till *next spring*. I shall not; nor do I expect *that* next spring. I have little expected this next! My dearest Madam, I allow all my folly and unreasonableness, and give them up and abandon them totally. I have most impertinently and absurdly tried, for my own sake merely, to exact from two young ladies, above forty years younger than myself, a promise of sacrificing their rooted inclinations to my whims and satisfaction. But my eyes are opened, my reason is returned, I condemn myself; and I now make you but one request, which is, that, though I am convinced it would be with the most friendly and good-natured meaning possible, I do implore you not to try to help me to delude myself any more. You never knew half the shock it gave me when I learned from Mr. Batt, what you had concealed from me, your fixed resolution of going abroad last October; and though I did in vain deprecate it,—your coming to Twickenham in September, which I know, and from my inmost soul believe, was from mere compassion and kindness to me,—yet it did aggravate my parting with you.

I would not repeat all this, but to prevail with you, while I do live, and while you do condescend to have any friendship for me, never to let me deceive myself. I have no right to inquire into your plans, views, or designs; and never will question you more about them. I shall deserve to be deluded if I do; but what you do please to say to me, I beg may be frank. I am, in every light, too weak to stand disappointment now: I cannot be disappointed. You have a

firmness that nothing shakes; and, therefore, it would be unjust to betray your good-nature into any degree of insincerity. You do nothing that is not reasonable and right; and I am conscious that you bore a thousand times more from my self-love and vanity, than any other two persons but yourselves would have supported with patience so long. Be assured that what I say I think, feel, and mean: derange none of your plans for me. I now wish you to take no one step but what is conformable to your views, interest, and satisfaction. It would hurt me to interfere with them: I reproach myself with having so ungenerously tried to lay you under any difficulties, and I approve your resolution in adhering steadily to your point. Two posts ago I hinted that I was weaning myself from the anxiety of an attachment to two persons that must have been so uneasy to them, and has ended so sorrowfully to myself; but that anxiety I restrict solely to the desire of your return: my friendship, had I years to live, could not alter or be shaken; and there is no kind of proof or instance of it that I will not give you both, while I have breath.

I have vented what I had at my heart, and feel relieved. Do not take ill a word I have said. Be assured I can love you as much as ever I did, and do; though I am no longer so unjust as to prefer my own satisfaction to yours. Here I drop the subject: before Tuesday, perhaps, I shall be able to talk on some other.

Monday, 7th.

Though the Parliament is met, and the town, they say, full, I have not heard a tittle of news of any sort; and yet my prison is a coffee-house in a morning, though I have been far from well this whole week. Yesterday and Saturday the gout was so painful in my right shoulder, that I could not stoop or turn round. To-day it is in my left elbow, and, I doubt, coming into my right foot: in short, it seems to be going its circle over again. I am not very sorry; sufferings reconcile one to parting with one's self.

One of our numerous tempests threw down Mrs. Damer's chimney last week, and it fell through her workshop; but

fortunately touched none of her own works, and only broke two or three insignificant casts. I suppose you know she returns through Spain. This minute I have heard that Lord Lothian's daughter, Lady Mary St. John, and daughter-in-law of Lady Di. Beauclerc, died yesterday, having been delivered of a fine boy but the day before. As you are curious to know the chief topic of conversation, it is the rival Operahouses, neither of which are opened yet; both saying the other is falling down. Taylor has published a pamphlet that does not prove that the Marquis¹ is the most upright Chamberlain that ever dropped from the skies, nor that the skies are quite true blue. Adieu! if no postscript to-morrow.—None.

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 12, 1791.

I HAVE received your two letters of January 17th and 24th with an account of your objects and plans; and the latter are very much what I expected, as before you receive this you will have seen by my last, No. 18. Indeed, you most kindly offer to break so far into your plan, as to return at the beginning of next winter; but as that would, as you say, not only be a sacrifice, but risk your healths, can anything upon earth be more impossible than for me to accept or consent to such a sacrifice? Were I even in love with one of you, could I agree to it? and, being only a most zealous friend, do you think I will hear of it? Should I be a friend at all, if I wished you, for my sake, to travel in winter over mountains, or risk the storms at sea, that I have not forgotten when you went away? Can I desire you to derange a reasonable plan of economy, that would put you quite at your ease at your return? Have I any pretensions for expecting, still less for asking, such or any sacrifices? Have I interested myself in your affairs only to embarrass them?

I do, in the most positive and solemn manner, refuse to accept the smallest sacrifice of any part of your plan, but the

¹ Of Salisbury.

single point that would be so *hard* on me. I will say not a word more on your return, and beg your pardon for having been so selfish as to desire it: my only request now is, that we may say no more about it. I am grieved that the great distance we are at must make me still receive letters about it for some weeks. I shall not forget how very unreasonable I have been myself; nor shall I try to forget it, lest I should be silly again: but I earnestly desire to be totally silent on a subject that I have totally abandoned, and which it is not at all improbable I may never have occasion to renew.

I knew the Comte de Coigny¹ in the year 1766: he was then lively and jovial. I did not think he would turn out a writer, or even reader; but he was agreeable. I say nothing on France: you must know as much as I do, and probably sooner. I will only tell you, that my opinion is not altered in a tittle. What will happen I do not pretend to guess; but am thoroughly persuaded that the present system, if it can be called so, cannot take root. The flirts towards anarchy here have no effect at all. Horne Tooke before Christmas presented a saucy libel to the House of Commons, as a petition on his election. The House contemptuously voted it only frivolous and vexatious, and disappointed him of a ray of martyrdom; but his fees, &c. will cost him three or four hundred pounds, which never go into a mob's calculation of the ingredients of martyrdom.²

Monday morning, 14th.

I have a story to tell you, much too long to add to this; which I will send next post, unless I have leisure enough to-day, from people that call on me, to finish it to-day, having begun it last night; and in that case I will direct it to Miss Agnes. Mr. Lysons the clergyman has just been here, and told me of a Welsh sportsman, a Jacobite I suppose, who has very recently had his daughter christened Louisa Victoria Maria Sobieski Foxhunter Moll Boycot. The curate of the

¹ Great-uncle of the present Duc de Coigny.

² On the 5th of February, the committee appointed to try the merits of the petition, reported it to be frivolous and vexatious. Mr. Burke urged the necessity of taking some step against the author of it; but the subject was got rid of by a motion for the order of the day.—E.

minister who baptized her confirmed the truth of it to Mr. Lysons. When Belgiojoso, the Austrian minister, was here, and thought he could write English, he sent a letter to Miss Kennedy, a woman of the town, that began, "My Kennedy Polly dear girl." Apropos—and not much—pray tell me whether the Cardinal of York calls himself King; and whether James the Eighth, Charles the Fourth, or what?

TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Feb. 13, 1791.

THE following narrative, though only the termination of a legend of which you know the foregoing chapters, is too singular and too long to be added to my letter; and therefore, though you will receive two by the same post, you will not repine. In short, the Gunninghiad is completed—not by a marriage, like other novels of the Minifies.¹ Voici how the dénouement happened.

Another supposed love-letter had come from the Marquis² within these few weeks; which was so improbable, that it raised more suspicions, and was more closely examined; and thence was discovered to have been both altered and interlined. On this the General sent *all* the letters down to the Marquis;³ desiring to be certified of their authenticity, or the contrary. I should tell you, that all this has happened since the death of his sister; who kept up the high tone, and said, *her* brother was not a man to be trifled with. The Marquis immediately distinguished the two kinds; owned the few letters that disclaimed all inclination for Miss Charlemagne, disavowed the rest. Thence fell the General's wrath on his consort; of which I have told you.

However, the General and his ducal brother-in-law thought

¹ The name of the family of Mrs. Gunning. See p. 388.

² George-Spencer Churchill, Marquis of Blandford; he succeeded his father as fourth Duke of Marlborough in 1817.—E.

³ General Gunning was son of John Gunning, Esq. of Castle-Coole, in the county of Roscommon, and brother of the beautiful Miss Gunning, married first, in 1752, to the Duke of Hamilton; and secondly, in 1759, to the Duke of Argyle.—E.

it expedient that Miss Charly's character should be cleared as far as possible; she still maintaining the prodigious encouragement she had received from the parents of her intended sposo. She was ordered to draw up a narrative, which should be laid before the Duke of Marlborough; and, if allowed by him, to be shown for her vindication. She obeyed; and her former assertions did not suffer by the new statement. But one singular circumstance was added: she confessed—ingenuous maid!—that, though she had not been able to resist so dazzling an offer, her heart was still her cousin's, the other Marquis.¹

Well! this narrative, after being laid before a confidential junto at Argyll-house, was sent to Blenheim by the General, by his own groom. Judge of the astonishment of the junto, when Carloman, almost as soon as was possible, laid before them a short letter from the Prince of Mindleheim,² declaring how delighted he and his Princess had been at their son's having made choice of so *beautiful* and *amiable* a virgin for his bride; how greatly they had encouraged the match; and how chagrined they were, that, from the lightness and inconstancy of his temper, the proposed alliance was quite at an end. This wonderful acquittal of the damsel the groom deposited he had received in *half-an-hour* after his arrival at Blenheim; and he gave the most natural and unembarrassed account of all the stages he had made, going and coming.

You may still suspect, and so did some of the council, that every tittle of this report and of the letter were not gospel: though I own, I thought the epistle not irreconcilable to other parts of the conduct of their graces about their children. Still, I defy you to guess a thousandth part of the marvellous explanation of the mystery.

The first circumstance that struck was, that the Duke, in his own son's name, had forgotten the *d* in the middle. That was possible in the hurry of doing justice. Next, the wax

¹ George-William Campbell, Marquis of Lorn. He succeeded his father as sixth Duke of Argyll in 1806.—E.

² The Emperor Joseph, in 1705, bestowed on the great Duke of Marlborough the principality of Mindleheim, in Suabia.—E.

was black; and nobody could discover for whom such illustrious personages were in mourning. Well; that was no proof one way or other. Unluckily, somebody suggested that Lord Henry Spencer was in town, though to return the next day to Holland. A messenger was sent to him, though very late at night, to beg he would repair to Argyll-house. He did: the letter was shown to him; he laughed, and said it had not the least resemblance to the father's hand. This was negative detection enough; but now comes the most positive and wonderful unravelling!

The next day the General received a letter from a gentleman, confessing that his wife, a friend of Miss Charly, had lately received from her a copy of a most satisfactory testimonial from the Duke of Marlborough in her favour (though, note, the narrative was not then gone to Blenheim); and begging the gentlewoman's husband would transcribe it, and send it to her, as she wished to send a copy to a friend in the country. The husband had done so, but had had the precaution to write at top *Copy*; and before the signature had written, *signed*, M.—both which words Miss had erased, and then delivered the gentleman's identic transcript to the groom, to be brought back as from Blenheim: which the *steady* groom, on being examined anew, confessed; and that, being bribed, he had gone but one post and invented the rest.

You will now pity the poor General, who has been a dupe from the beginning, and sheds floods of tears; nay, has actually turned his daughter out of doors, as she is banished from Argyll-house too: and Lady Charlotte,¹ to her honour, speaks of her with the utmost indignation. In fact, there never was a more extraordinary tissue of effrontery, folly, and imposture.

It is a strange but not a miraculous part of this strange story, that Gunnilda is actually harboured by, and lodges with, the old Duchess² in Pall-Mall, the grandmother of whom she has miscarried, and who was the first that was big with her.

¹ Lady Charlotte Campbell. See p. 389.—E.

² Gertrude, eldest daughter of John Earl Gower, widow of John fourth Duke of Bedford.—E.

You may depend on the authenticity of this narrative, and may guess from whom I received all the circumstances, day by day; but pray, do not quote me for that reason, nor let it out of your hands, nor transcribe any part of it. The town knows the story confusedly, and a million of false readings there will be; but, though you know it exactly, do not send it back hither. You will, perhaps, be diverted by the various ways in which it will be related. Yours, &c.

EGINHART, secretary to Charlemagne

and the Princess Gunnilda, his daughter.

P. S. Bowen is the name of the gentleman who gave information of the letter sent to him to be copied, on hearing of the suspected forgeries. The whole *Minifry* are involved in the suspicions, as they defend the damsel, who still confesses nothing; and it is her mother, not she, who is supposed to have tampered with the groom; and is discarded, too, by her husband.

TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.¹

Berkeley Square, Feb. 17, 1791.

It is difficult, my lord, with common language that has been so prostituted in compliments, to express the real sense of gratitude, which I do feel at my heart, for the obligation I have to your lordship for an act of friendship as unexpected as it was unsolicited; which last circumstance doubles the favour, as it evinces your lordship's generosity and nobleness of temper, without surprising me. How can I thank your lordship, as I ought, for interesting yourself, and of yourself, to save me a little mortification, which I deserve, and should deserve more, had I the vanity to imagine that my printing a few copies of my disgusting tragedy would occasion different and surreptitious editions of it?

¹ Now first collected. This letter was written in consequence of one Walpole had received, informing him that a Dublin bookseller was about to print his tragedy of *The Mysterious Mother*. At this time, and indeed until the Union took place, there was no act of parliament which regulated literary property in Ireland.—E.

Mr. Walker has acquainted me, my lord, that your lordship has most kindly interposed to prevent a bookseller of Dublin from printing an edition of "The Mysterious Mother" without my consent; and, with the conscious dignity of a great mind, your lordship has not even hinted to me the graciousness of that favour. How have I merited such condescending goodness, my lord? Had I a prospect of longer life, I never could pay the debt of gratitude; the weightier, as your lordship did not intend I should know that I owe it. My gratitude can never be effaced; and I am charmed that it is due, and due with so much honour to me, that nothing could bribe me to have less obligation to your lordship, of which I am so proud. But as to the play itself, I doubt it must take its fate. Mr. Walker tells me the booksellers have desired him to remonstrate to me, urging that they have already expended fifty pounds; and Mr. Walker adds, as no doubt would be the case, that should this edition be stifled, when now expected, some other printer would publish it. I certainly might indemnify the present operator, but I know too much of the craft, not to be sure, that I should be persecuted by similar exactions; and, alas! I have exposed myself but too much to the tyranny of the press, not to know that it taxes delinquents as well as multiplies their faults.

In truth, my lord, it is too late now to hinder copies of my play from being spread. It has appeared here, both whole and in fragments; and, to prevent a spurious one, I was forced to have some printed myself: therefore, if I consent to an Irish edition, it is from no vain desire of diffusing the performance. Indeed, my good lord, I have lived too long, not to have divested myself both of vanity and affected modesty. I have not existed to past seventy-three without having discovered the futility and triflingness of my own talents: and, at the same time, it would be impertinent to pretend to think that there is no merit in the execution of a tragedy, on which I have been so much flattered; though I am sincere in condemning the egregious absurdity of selecting a subject so improper for the stage, and even offensive to private readers.

But I have said too much on a personal theme; and therefore, after repeating a million of thanks to your lordship for the honour of your interposition, I will beg your lordship, if you please, to signify to the bookseller that you withdraw your prohibition: but I shall not answer Mr. Walker's letter till I have your lordship's approbation, for you are both my lord chamberlain and licenser; and though I have a tolerably independent spirit, I may safely trust myself under the absolute power of one, who has voluntarily protected me against the licentiousness of those who have invaded my property, and who distinguishes so accurately and justly between licence and liberty.

TO MISS AGNES BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 18, 1791.

HERE is a shocking, not a fatal, codicil to Gunnilda's story. But first I should tell you, that two days after the explosion, the Signora Madre took a postchaise and four, and drove to Blenheim; but, not finding the Duke and Duchess there, she inquired where the Marquis was, and pursued him to Sir Henry Dashwood's: finding him there, she began about her poor daughter; but he interrupted her, said there was an end put to all that, and desired to lead her to her chaise, which he insisted on doing, and did. I think this another symptom of the Minifry being accomplices to the daughter's enterprises. Well! after the groom's confession, and after Mr. Bowen had been confronted with her, and produced to her face her note to his wife, which she resolutely disowned, she desired the Duke of Argyll to let her take an oath on the Bible of her perfect innocence of every circumstance of the whole transaction; which you may be sure he did not permit. N'importe: the next day, taking two of the Duchess of Bedford's servants for witnesses, she went before a justice of peace, swore to her innocence and ignorance throughout, even of the note to Mrs. Bowen; and then said to the magistrate, "Sir, from my youth you may imagine I do not know the

solemnity of an oath; but, to convince you I do, I know my salvation depends on what I have now sworn." Solve all this, if you can! Is it madness? Does even romance extend its inventions so far? or its dispensations? It is but a burlesque part of this wonderful tale, that old crazy Bedford exhibits Miss every morning on the causeway in Hyde Park; and declares her protégée some time ago refused the hand of your acquaintance, Mr. Trevelyan.¹ Except of the contending Opera-houses, one can hear of nothing but Miss Gunning; but it is now grown so disgusting a story, that I shall be glad to hear and repeat to you no more about it.

The Pantheon has opened, and is small, they say, but pretty and simple; all the rest ill-conducted, and from the singers to the scene-shifters imperfect; the dances long and bad, and the whole performance so dilatory and tedious, that it lasted from eight to half an hour past twelve. The rival theatre is said to be magnificent and lofty, but it is doubtful whether it will be suffered to come to light: in short, the contest will grow politics; *Dieu et Mon Droit* supporting the Pantheon, and *Ich Dien* countenancing the Haymarket. It is unlucky that the amplest receptacle is to hold the minority!

20th.

O'Hara² is come to town. You will love him better than ever. He persuaded the captain of the ship, whom you will love for being persuaded, to stop at Lisbon, that he might see Mrs. Damer. O'Hara has been shockingly treated! The House of Richmond is on the point of receiving a very great blow. Colonel Lenox, who had been dangerously ill but was better, has relapsed, with all the worst symptoms;³ and is too weak to be sent to the south, as the physicians re-

¹ Mr. Trevelyan married, in the following August, Maria, daughter of Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, Bart. On the death of his father, in 1828, he succeeded to the title, as fifth baronet.—E.

² Afterwards lieutenant-governor of Gibraltar. He died in 1802.

³ Colonel Lenox recovered from his illness, and, in 1806, succeeded his uncle as fourth Duke of Richmond. His grace was governor of Canada at the period of his decease, at Montreal, in 1819; and was succeeded by the son here anticipated; who was born on the 3rd of August 1791.—E.

commended. Lady Charlotte is breeding, but that is very precarious; and should it even be a son, how many years ere that can be a comfortable resource!

Is not it strange that London, in February and Parliament sitting, should furnish no more paragraphs? Yet, confined at home and in everybody's way, and consequently my room being a coffee-house from two to four, I probably hear all events worth relating as soon as they are born, and send you them before they are a week old. Indeed, I think the Gunninghiana may last you a month at Pisa, where, I suppose, the grass grows in the streets as fast as news. When I go out again, I am likely to know less: I go but to few, and those the privatest places I can find, which are not the common growth of London; nor, but to amuse you, should I inquire after news. What is a juvenile world to me; or its pleasures, interests, or squabbles? I scarce know the performers by sight.

21st.

It is very hard! The Gunnings will not let me or the town have done with them. La Madre has advertised a Letter to the Duke of Argyll: so he is forced to collect counter affidavits. The groom has deposed that she promised him twenty pounds a year for his life, and he has given up a letter that she wrote to him. The mother, when she went after the Marquis, would have persuaded him to get into her chaise; but he would not venture being carried to Gretna-green, and married by force. She then wanted him to sign a paper, that all was over between him and her daughter. He said, "Madam, nothing was ever begun;" and refused.

I told you wrong: mother and daughter were not actually in the Duchess of Bedford's house, but in Lord John Russel's, which she lent to them; nor were her servants witnesses to the oath before Justice Hide, but Dr. Halifax and the apothecary. The Signora and her Infanta now, *for privacy*, are retired into St. James's-street, next door to Brooks's; whence it is supposed Miss will angle for unmarried Marquises — perhaps for Lord Titchfield.¹ It is lost time for

¹ In 1795, the Marquis of Titchfield married Miss Scott, eldest

people to write novels, who can compose such a romance as these good folks have invented. Adieu !

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 26, 1791.

I HAVE no letter from you to answer, nor anything new that is the least interesting to tell you. The Duke of Argyll has sent a gentleman with a cart-load of affidavits, which the latter read to mother and daughter, in order to prevent the publication of their libel; but it only enraged the former, who vows she will print all she knows, that is, anything she has heard by their entire intimacy in the family, or, no doubt, what she can invent or misrepresent. What a Medusa !

There has been a fragment of a rehearsal in the Haymarket, but still the Pantheon remains master of the field of battle: the vanquished are preparing manifestos, but they seldom recover the day.

Madame du Barry¹ is come over to recover her jewels, of which she has been robbed — not by the National Assembly, but by four Jews who have been seized here and committed to Newgate. Though the late Lord Barrymore acknowledged her husband to be of his noble blood, will she own the present Earl for a relation, when she finds him turned strolling player !² If she regains her diamonds, perhaps Mrs. Hastings may carry her to court.³

If you want bigger events, you may send to the Russian army, who will cut you fifteen thousand throats in a paragraph; or, en attendant, you may piddle with the havoc made at Chantilly, which has been half demolished by the rights of men, as the poor old Mesdames have been stopped by the

daughter and heir of General John Scott, of Balcomie, in the county of Fife, and in 1809, succeeded his father as fourth Duke of Portland.—E.

¹ The last mistress of Louis the Fifteenth. The Count du Barry, who had disgraced his name by marrying her, claimed to be of the same family with the Earls of Barrymore in Ireland. See vol. v. p. 256.—E.

² See *antè*, p. 365.

³ Mrs. Hastings was supposed, by the party violence of the day, to have received immense bribes in diamonds.

rights of the poissardes; for, as it is true that extremes meet, the moment despotism was hurled from the throne, it devolved to the mob, whose majesties, not being able to write their names, do not issue *lettres de cachet*, but execute their wills with their own hands; for hanging, which degrades an executioner, *ne déroge pas* in sovereigns — witness the Czar Peter the Great, Muley Ishmael, and many religious and gracious African monarchs.

After eleven weeks of close confinement, I went out yesterday to take the air; but was soon driven back by rain and sleet, which soon ripened to a tempest of wind and snow, and continued all night: it does not freeze, but blows so hard, that I shall sally out no more till the weather has recovered its temper — I do not mean that I expect Pisan skies.

28th.

It was on Saturday that I began this; it is now Monday, and I have no letter from you, though we have had dozens of east winds. I am sorry to find that it costs above six weeks to say a word at Pisa and have an answer in London. This makes correspondence very uncomfortable; you will be talking to me of Miss Gunning, when, perhaps, she may be sent to Botany Bay, and be as much forgotten here as *the Monster*.¹ Still she has been a great resource this winter; for, though London is apt to produce Wilkeses, and George Gordons, and Mrs. Rudds, and Horne Tookes, and other phenomena, wet and dry, the present season has been very unprolific; and we are forced to import French news, as we used to do fashions and Operas comiques. The Mesdames are actually set out: I shall be glad to hear they are safe at Turin, for are there no poissardes but at Paris?² *Natio poisarda est.*

¹ A vagabond so called, from his going about attempting to stab at women with a knife. His first aim had probably been at their pockets, which having in several instances missed and wounded his intended victims, fear and a love of the marvellous dubbed him with the name of the Monster. The wretch, whose name was Renwick Williams, was tried for the offence at the Old Bailey, in July 1790, and found guilty of a misdemeanour.—E.

² After numerous interruptions, the King's aunts were permitted by the National Assembly to proceed to Italy.—E.

Mr. Gibbon writes that he has seen Necker, and found him still devoured by ambition,¹ and I should think by mortification at the foolish figure he has made. Gibbon admires Burke to the skies, and even the religious parts, he says.²

Monday evening.

The east winds are making me amends; one of them has brought me twins. I am sorry to find that even Pisa's sky is not quite sovereign, but that you have both been out of order, though, thank God! quite recovered both. If a Florentine March is at all like an English one, I hope you will not remove thither till April. Some of its months, I am sure, were sharper than those of our common wear are. Pray be quite easy about me: I am entirely recovered, though, if change were bad, we have scarce had one day without every variety of bad weather, with a momentary leaf-gold of sun. I have been out three times, and to-day have made five-and-twenty visits, and was let in at six; and, though a little fatigued, am still able, you see, to finish my letter. You seem to think I palliated my illness: I certainly did not tell you that I thought it doubtful how it would end; yet I told you all the circumstances, and surely did not speak sanguinely.

I wish, in No. 20, you had not again named October or November. I have quite given up those months, and am

¹ "I have passed," says Gibbon, in a letter to Lord Sheffield, "four days at the castle of Copet with Necker; and could have wished to have shown him as a warning to any aspiring youth possessed with the demon of ambition. With all the means of private happiness in his power, he is the most miserable of human beings: the past, the present, and the future, are equally odious to him. When I suggested some domestic amusement of books, building, &c. he answered, with a deep tone of despair, '*Dans l'état où je suis, je ne puis sentir que le coup de vent qui m'a abbatu.*' How different from the conscious cheerfulness with which our friend Lord North supported his fall! Madame Necker maintains more external composure, *mais le diable n'y perd rien*. It is true that Necker wished to be carried into the closet, like old Pitt, on the shoulders of the people, and that he has been ruined by the democracy which he had raised. I believe him to be an able financier, and know him to be an honest man."—E.

² The following are Gibbon's expressions:—"Burke's book is a most admirable medicine against the French disease; which has made too much progress even in this happy country. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition."—E.

vexed I ever pressed for them, as they would break into your reasonable plans, for which I abandon any foolish ones of my own. But I am a poor philosopher, or rather am like all philosophers, have no presence of mind, and must study my part before I can act it. I have now settled myself not to expect you this year—do not unsettle me: I dread a disappointment, as I do a relapse of the gout; and therefore cut this article short, that I may not indulge vain hopes. My affection for you both is unalterable: can I give so strong a proof as by supplicating you, as I do earnestly, to act as is most prudent for your healths and interest? A long journey in November would be the worst part you could take, and I beseech you not to think of it: for me, you see I take a great deal of killing, nor is it so easy to die as is imagined.

Thank you, my dearest Miss Agnes, for your postscript. I love to see your hand-writing; and yet do not press for it, as you are shy: though I address myself equally to both, and consult the healths of both in what I have recommended above. Here is a postscript for yours: Madame du Barry was to go and swear to her jewels before the Lord Mayor. Boydell, who is a little better bred than Monsieur Bailly,¹ made excuses for being obliged to administer the oath *chez lui*, but

¹ M. Bailly, the learned astronomer. He was president of the first National Assembly, and in July 1789 appointed mayor of Paris; in which situation he gave great offence to the people, in July 1791, by ordering martial law to be proclaimed against a mob which had assembled in the Champ de Mars to frame an address, recommending the deposition of Louis. For this step, which was approved of by the Assembly, he was arrested, tried, condemned, and put to death on the 11th of November 1793. The details of this event are horrible. "The weather," says M. Thiers, "was cold and rainy. Conducted on foot, he manifested the utmost composure amidst the insults of a barbarous populace, whom he had fed while he was mayor. On reaching the foot of the scaffold, one of the wretches cried out, that the field of the federation ought not to be polluted by his blood. The people instantly rushed upon the guilotine, bore it off, and erected it again upon a dung-hill on the bank of the Seine, and opposite to the spot where Bailly had passed his life and composed his invaluable works. This operation lasted some hours: meanwhile, he was compelled to walk several times round the Champ de Mars, bareheaded, and with his hands pinioned behind him. Some pelted him with mud, others kicked and struck him with sticks. He fell exhausted. They lifted him up again. 'Thou tremblest!' said a soldier to him. 'My friend,' replied the old man, 'it is cold.' At length he was delivered over to the executioner; and another illustrious scholar, and one of the most virtuous of men, was then taken from it." Vol. iii. p. 207.—E.

begged she would name her hour; and, when she did, he fetched her himself in the state-coach, and had a mayor-royal banquet ready for her.¹ She has got most of her jewels again. I want the King to send her four Jews to the National Assembly, and tell them it is the change or *la monnoie* of Lord George Gordon, the Israelite.

Colonel Lenox is much better: the Duchess of Leinster had a letter from Goodwood to-day which says he rides out. I am glad you do. I said nothing on "the Charming-man's" poem. I fear I said too much to him myself. He said, others liked it; and showed me a note from Mr. Burke, that was hyperbole itself. I wish him so well, that I am sorry he should be so flattered, when, in truth, he has no genius.² There is no novelty, no plan, and no suite in his poetry; though many of the lines are pretty. Dr. Darwin alone can exceed his predecessors.

Let me repeat to both, that distance of place and time can make no alteration in my friendship. It grew from esteem for your characters, and understandings, and tempers; and became affection from your good-natured attentions to me, where there is so vast a disproportion in our ages. Indeed, that complaisance spoiled me; but I have weaned myself of my own self-love, and you shall hear no more of its dictates.

¹ See *post*, p. 408.—E.

² Mr. Gifford was of Walpole's opinion, and has, in consequence, accorded to "The Charming-man" a prominent situation in the *Baviad*—

"See sniv'ling Jerningham at fifty weep
O'er love-lorn oxen and deserted sheep."

To the poem here alluded to, and which was entitled "Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction," the satirist thus alludes:—"I thought I understood something of faces; but I must read my Lavater over again I find. That a gentleman, with the 'physionomie d'un mouton qui rêve,' should suddenly start up a new Tyrtæus, and pour a dreadful note through a cracked war-trump, amazes me: well, *fronti nulla fides* shall henceforth be my motto." In a note to the *Pursuits of Literature*, Mr. Mathias directs the attention of Mr. Jerningham to the following beautiful lines in Dryden's *Epistle to Mr. Julien, Secretary of the Muses*:—

"All his care
Is to be thought a Poet fine and fair;
Small beer and gruel are his meat and drink,
The diet he prescribes himself to think;
Rhyme next his heart he takes at morning peep,
Some love-epistles at the hour of sleep;
And when his passion has been bubbling long,
The scum at last boils up into a song."—E.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, March 5, 1791.

ONE may live in a vast capital, and know no more of three parts of it than of Carthage. When I was at Florence, I have surprised some Florentines by telling them, that London was built, like their city, (where you often cross the bridges several times in a day,) on each side of the river; and yet that I had never been but on one side; for then I had never been in Southwark. When I was very young, and in the height of the opposition to my father, my mother wanted a large parcel of bugles; for what use I forget. As they were then out of fashion, she could get none. At last, she was told of a quantity in a little shop in an obscure alley in the City. We drove thither; found a great stock; she bought it, and bade the proprietor send it home. He said, "Whither?" "To Sir Robert Walpole's." He asked coolly, "Who is Sir Robert Walpole?"

This is very like Cambridge, who tells you three stories to make you understand a fourth. In short, t'other morning a gentleman made me a visit, and asked if I had heard of the great misfortune that had happened? The Albion Mills are burnt down. I asked where they were; supposing they were powder-mills in the country, that had blown up. I had literally never seen or heard of the spacious lofty building at the end of Blackfriars Bridge. At first it was supposed maliciously burnt, and it is certain the mob stood and enjoyed the conflagration, as of a monopoly; but it had been on fire, and it was thought extinguished. The building had cost a hundred thousand pounds; and the loss in corn and flour is calculated at a hundred and forty thousand. I do not answer for the truth of the sums; but it is certain that the Palace-yard and part of St. James's Park were covered with half-burnt grain.¹

¹ The fire took place on the morning of the 2nd of March. There was no reason for any particular suspicion, except the general dislike in the lower classes of the people, arising from a notion, that the undertaking enhanced the price of corn and decreased the value of labour.—E.

This accident, and my introduction, have helped me to a good part of my letter; for you must have observed, that even in this overgrown town the winter has not been productive of events. Good night! I have two days to wait for a letter that I may answer. Stay; I should tell you, that I have been at Sir Joseph Banks's literary saturnalia,¹ where was a Parisian watch-maker, who produced the smallest automaton that I suppose was ever created. It was a rich snuff-box, not too large for a woman. On opening the lid, an enamelled bird started up, sat on the rim, turned round, fluttered its wings, and piped in a delightful tone the notes of different birds; particularly the jug-jug of the nightingale. It is the prettiest plaything you ever saw; the price tempting—only five hundred pounds. That economist, the Prince of Wales, could not resist it, and has bought one of those dickybirds. If the maker finds such customers, he will not end like one of his profession here, who made the serpent in Orpheus and Euridyce;² and who fell so deeply in love with his own works, that he did nothing afterwards but make serpents, of all sorts and sizes, till he was ruined and broke. I have not a tittle to add—but that the Lord Mayor did not fetch Madame du Barry in the City-royal coach; but kept her to dinner. She is gone; but returns in April.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday, March 19, 1791.

I DID not begin my letter on customary Friday, because I had nothing new to tell or to say. The town lies fallow—not an incident worth repeating as far as I know. Parliament manufactures only bills, not politics. I never understood anything useful; and, now that my time and connections are shrunk to so narrow a compass, what business have I with business? As I have mended considerably for the last four

¹ Sir Joseph Banks, while president of the Royal Society, had a weekly evening reception of all persons distinguished in science or the arts.

² A celebrated opera.

days, and as we have had a fortnight of soft warm weather, and a south-west wind to-day, I have ventured hither for change of air, and to give orders about some repairs at Cliveden; which, by the way, Mr. Henry Bunbury, two days ago, proposed to take off my hands for his life. I really do not think I accepted his offer. I shall return to town on Monday, and hope to find a letter to answer—or what will this do?

Berkeley Square, Monday evening.

I am returned, and find the only letter I dreaded, and the only one, I trust, that I shall ever not be impatient to receive from you. Though ten thousand times kinder than I deserve, it wounds my heart; as I find I have hurt two of the persons I love the best upon earth, and whom I am most constantly studying to please and serve. That I soon repented of my murmurs, you have seen by my subsequent letters. The truth, as you may have perceived, though no excuse, was, that I had thought myself dying, and should never see you more; that I was extremely weak and low when Mrs. Damer's letter arrived, and mentioned her supposing I should not see you till spring twelvemonth. That terrible sentence recalled Mr. Batt's being the first to assure me of your going abroad, when I had concluded you had laid aside the design. I did sincerely allow that in both instances you had acted from tenderness in concealing your intentions; but, as I knew I could better bear the information from yourselves than from others, I thought it unfriendly to let me learn from others what interested me so deeply: yet I do not in the least excuse my conduct; no, I condemn it in every light, and shall never forgive myself if you do not promise me to be guided entirely by your own convenience and inclinations about your return. I am perfectly well again, and just as likely to live one year as half an one. Indulge your pleasure in being abroad while you are there. I am now reasonable enough to enjoy your happiness as my own; and, since you are most kind when I least deserve it, how can I express my gratitude for giving up the scruple that was so distressing to me! Convince me you are in earnest by giving me notice that you will write to

Charing-cross while the Neapolitans are at Florence.¹ I will look on that as a clearer proof of your forgiving my criminal letter, than your return before you like it. It is most sure that nothing is more solid or less personal than my friendship for you two; and even my complaining letter, though unjust and unreasonable, proved that the nearer I thought myself to quitting the world, the more my heart was set on my two friends; nay, *they* had occupied the busiest moments of my illness as well as the most fretful ones. Forgive then, my dearest friends, what could proceed from nothing but too impatient affection. You say most truly you did not deserve my complaints: your patience and temper under them make me but the more in the wrong; and to have hurt you, who have known but too much grief, is such a contradiction to the whole turn of my mind ever since I knew you, that I believe my weakness from illness was beyond even what I suspected. It is sure that, when I am in my perfect senses, the whole bent of my thoughts is to promote your and your sister's felicity; and you know nothing can give me satisfaction like your allowing me to be of use to you. I speak honestly, notwithstanding my unjust letter; I had rather serve you than see you. Here let me finish this subject: I do not think I shall be faulty to you again.

The Mother Gunning has published her letter to the Duke of Argyll, and it disappoints everybody. It is neither romantic, nor entertaining, nor abusive, but on the General and Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, and the General's groom. On the Bowens it is so immeasurably scurrilous, that I think they must prosecute her. She accuses them and her husband of a conspiracy to betray and ruin his own daughter, without even attempting to assign a motive to them. Of the House of Argyll she says not a word. In short, it is a most dull incoherent rhapsody, that gives no account at all of the story that gave origin to her

¹ His correspondents, to settle his mind as to the certainty of their return at the time they had promised, had assured him, that no financial difficulties should stand in the way; which is what he means by sending to Charing-cross (to Drummond his banker). No such difficulties occurred. The correspondence, therefore, with Charing-cross never took place.—M. B.

book, and at which no mortal could guess from it; and the 246 pages contain nothing but invectives on her four supposed enemies, and endless tiresome encomiums on the virtues of her *glorious darling*, and the unspottable innocence of that harmless lambkin. I would not even send it to you if I had an opportunity—you would not have patience to go through it; and there, I suppose, the absurd legend will end. I am heartily tired of it. Adieu!

P. S. That ever *I* should give *you two* an uneasy moment! Oh! forgive me: yet I do not deserve pardon in my own eyes; and less in my own heart.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Sunday, March 27, 1791.

THOUGH I begin my despatch to-day, I think I shall change my post-days, as I hinted, from Tuesdays to Fridays; not only as more commodious for learning news for you, but as I do not receive your letters generally but on Mondays, I have less time to answer. I have an additional reason for delay this week. Mr. Pitt has notified that he is to deliver a message from the King to-morrow, to the House of Commons on the situation of Europe; and should there be a long debate, I may not gather the particulars till Tuesday morning, and if my levee lasts late, shall not have time to write to you. Oh! now are you all impatience to hear *that* message; I am sorry to say that I fear it is to be a warlike one. The Autocratrix swears, d—n her eyes! she *will* hack her way to Constantinople through the blood of one hundred thousand more Turks, and that we are very impertinent for sending her a card with a sprig of olive. On the other hand, Prussia bounces and huffs and claims our promise of helping him to make peace by helping him to make war; and so, in the most charitable and pacific way in the world, we are, they say, to send twenty ships to the Baltic, and half as many to the Black Sea,—this little Britain, commonly called Great

Britain, is to dictate to Petersburg and Bengal, and cover Constantinople under those wings that reach from the North Pole to the farthest East! I am mighty sorry for it, and hope we shall not prove a jackdaw that pretends to dress itself in the plumes of imperial eagles!

If we bounce abroad, we are more forgiving at home: a gentleman who lives at the east end of St. James's Park has been sent for by a lady who has a large house at the west end,¹ and they have kissed and are friends; which he notified by toasting her health in a bumper at a club the other day. I know no circumstances, but am glad of it; I love peace, public or private: not so the chieftains of the contending theatres of harmony. Taylor, in wondrous respectful terms and full of affliction, has printed in the newspapers an advertisement, declaring that the Marquis's honour the Lord Chamberlain² did in one season, and that an unprofitable one, send *orders* (you know, that is tickets of admission without paying) into the Opera-house, to the loss of the managers of four hundred pounds—servants, it is supposed, and Hertfordshire voters eke: and moreover, that it has been sworn in Chancery that his lordship, not as lord chamberlain, has stipulated with Gallini and O'Reilly that he, his heirs and assigns, should preserve the power of giving those detrimental *orders* in perpetuity. The immunity is a little new: former chamberlains, it seems, even *durante officio*, have not exercised the privilege—if they had it.

One word more of the Gunnings. Captain Bowen informed the authoress, by the channel of the papers, that he shall prosecute her for the libel. She answered, by the same conveyance, that she is extremely glad of it. But there is a difficulty—unless the prosecution is criminal, it is thought that Madam being *femme couverte*, the charge must be made against her husband; and, to be sure, it would be droll that the General should be attacked for not hindering his wife from writing a libel, that is more virulent against him himself

¹ The Queen and the Prince of Wales.

² The Marquis of Salisbury.

than anybody ! Another little circumstance has come out : till the other day he did not know that he had claimed descent from Charlemagne in the newspapers ; which, therefore, is referred to the same manufacture as the other forgeries. The General said, “ It is true, I am well born ; but I know no such family in Ireland as the Charlemagnes.”

Lord Ossory has just been here, and told me that Gunnilda has written to Lord Blandford, in her own name and hand, begging his pardon (for promising herself marriage in his name), but imputing the first thought to his grandmother, whom she probably inspired to think of it. This letter the Duchess of Marlborough carried to the Duchess of Bedford, to open her eyes on her *protégée*, but with not much success ; for what signify eyes, when the rest of the head is gone ? She only said, “ You may be easy, for both mother and daughter, are gone to France ”—no doubt, on finding her grace’s money not so forthcoming as her countenance, and terrified by Captain Bowen’s prosecution—and there, I hope, will terminate that strange story ; for in France there is not a marquis left to marry her. One has heard of nothing else for these seven months ; and it requires some ingenuity to keep up the attention of such a capital as London for above half a year together.

I supped on Thursday at Mrs. Buller’s with the Conways and Mount-Edgcumbes ; and the next night at Lady Ailesbury’s with the same company, and Lady Augusta Clavering.¹ You know, on the famous night at your house when Gunnilda pretended that her father had received Lord Blandford’s appointment of the wedding-day, we suspected, when they were gone, that we had seen doubts in Lady Augusta’s face, and I desired her uncle, Lord Frederick, to ask her if we had guessed right ; but she protests she had then no suspicion.

I have determined to send this away on Tuesday, whether I know the details of the temple of Janus to-morrow in time or not, that you may give yourselves airs of importance, if the Turin ministers pretend to tell you news of your own country

¹ Eldest daughter of John Duke of Argyle.

that you do not know. You may say, your *chargé des affaires* sent you word of the King's message; and you may be mysterious about the rest; for mystery in the diplomatic dictionary is construed knowledge, though, like a Hebrew word, it means the reverse too.

Sunday night.

I have been at White Pussy's¹ this evening. She asked much after you's. I did not think her lord looked as if *he* would drive Prince Potemkin out of Bulgaria; but we trust that a new Frederick of Prussia and a new William Pitt will. Could they lay Catherine in the Black Sea, as ghosts used to be laid in the Red, the world would be obliged to them.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, April 3, 1791.

Oh! what a shocking accident! Oh! how I detest your going abroad more than I have done yet in my crossdest mood! You escaped the storm on the 10th of October, that gave me such an alarm; you passed unhurt through the cannibals of France and their republic of larrons and poissardes, who terrified me sufficiently; but I never expected that you would dash yourself to pieces at Pisa!² You say I love truth, and that you have told me the exact truth; but how can fear believe?

How I hate a party of pleasure! It never turns out well: fools fall out, and sensible people fall down! Still I thank you a million of times for writing yourself. If Miss Agnes had written for you, I confess I should have been ten times more alarmed than I am; and yet I am alarmed enough.

Not to torment you more with my fears, when I hope you are almost recovered, I will answer the rest of your letter.

¹ Elizabeth Cary, wife of Lord Amherst, at this time commander-in-chief.

² Miss Berry had fallen down a bank in the neighbourhood of Pisa, and received a severe cut on the nose.

General O'Hara I have unluckily not met yet. He is so dispersed, and I am so confined in my resorts and so seldom dine from home, that I have not seen him, even at General Conway's. When I do, can you imagine that we shall not talk of you two — yes; and your accident, I am sure, will be the chief topic. As our fleets are to dethrone Catherine Petruchia, O'Hara will probably not be sent to Siberia. Apropos to Catherine and Petruchio. I supped with their representatives, Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, t'other night at Miss Farren's: the Hothams¹ were there too, and Mrs. Anderson,² who treated the players with acting as many characters as ever they did, particularly Gunnilda and Lady Clackmannan.³ Mrs. Siddons is leaner, but looks well: she has played Jane Shore and Desdemona, and is to play in the Gamester; all the parts she will act this year. Kemble, they say, shone in Othello.

Mrs. Damer has been received at Elvas with all military honours, and a banquet, by order of Mello, formerly ambassador here. It was handsome in him, but must have distressed her, who is so void of ostentation and love of show. Miss Boyle,⁴ who no more than Miss Pulteney,⁵ has let herself be snapped up by lovers of her fortune, is going to Italy for a year with Lord and Lady Malden.⁶

Berkeley Square, Monday after dinner.

Mirabeau is dead;⁷ ay, miraculously; for it was of a pu-

¹ Sir Charles Hotham Thompson, married to Lady Dorothy Hobart, sister of John second Earl of Buckinghamshire.

² A daughter of Lady Cecilia Johnstone's, married to a brother of Charles Anderson Pelham, Lord Garborough.

³ A nickname, which had been given by the writer to a lady of the society.

⁴ Afterwards married to Lord Henry Fitzgerald.

⁵ Afterwards married to Sir James Murray.

⁶ Lord Malden, afterwards Earl of Essex, was a first cousin of Miss Boyle's. This journey did not take place.

⁷ Mirabeau died on the 2nd of April, at the age of forty-two, a victim to his own debaucheries. His friend, M. Dupont, says of him, that "trusting to the strength of his constitution, he gave himself up, without restraint, to every kind of pleasure." Madame de Stael states, that he suffered cruelly in the last days of his life, and when no longer able to speak, wrote to his physician for a dose of opium, in the words of

trid fever (that began in his heart). Dr. Price is dying also.¹ That Mr. Berry, with so much good nature and good sense should be staggered, I do not wonder. Nobody is more devoted to liberty than I am. It is therefore that I abhor the National Assembly, whose outrageous violence has given, I fear, a lasting wound to the cause; for anarchy is despotism in the hands of thousands. A lion attacks but when hungry or provoked; but who can live in a desert full of hyænas?—nobody but Mr. Bruce; and we have only his word for it. Here is started up another corsair; one Paine, from America, who has published an answer to Mr. Burke.² His doctrines go to the extremity of levelling; and his style is so coarse, that you would think he meant to degrade the language as much as the government: here is one of his delicate paragraphs:—"We do not want a king, or lords of the bedchamber, or lords of the kitchen," &c. This rhetoric, I suppose, was calculated for our poissardes.

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Friday night, April 15, 1791.

My preface will be short; for I have nothing to tell, and a great deal that I am waiting most impatiently to hear; all which, however, may be couched in these two phrases,—“I am quite recovered of my fall, and my nose will not be the worse for it”—for with all my pretences, I cannot help having that nose a little upon my spirits; though if it were flat, I should love it as much as ever, for the sake of the head and heart that belong to it. I have seen O'Hara, with his face as

Hamlet, “to die—to sleep!” His obsequies were celebrated with great pomp, and his body placed in the Pantheon, by the side of that of Descartes. In two short years, his ashes were removed, by order of the Convention, and scattered abroad by the populace; who, at the same time, burned his bust in the Place de Grève.—E.

¹ Dr. Price died on the 19th of April.—E.

² This was the first part of the “Rights of Man,” in answer to the celebrated “Reflections.” At the commencement of the year, Paine had published at Paris, under the borrowed name of Achille Duchatellat, a tract recommending the abolition of royalty.—E.

ruddy and black, and his teeth as white as ever; and as fond of you two, and as grieved for your fall, as anybody—but I. He has got a better regiment.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, past eleven.

You chose your time ill for going abroad this year: England never saw such a spring since it was fifteen years old. The warmth, blossoms, and verdure are unparalleled. I am just come from Richmond, having first called on Lady Di. who is designing and painting pictures for prints to Dryden's Fables.¹ Oh! she has done two most beautiful; one of Emily walking in the garden, and Palamon seeing her from the tower: the other, a noble, free composition of Theseus parting the rivals, when fighting in the wood. They are not, as you will imagine, at all like the pictures in the Shakspeare Gallery: no; *they* are worthy of Dryden.

I can tell you nothing at all certain of our war with Russia. If one believes the weather-glass of the stocks, it will be peace: they had fallen to 71, and are risen again, and soberly, to 79. Fawkener, clerk of the council, sets out to-day or to-morrow for Berlin; probably, I hope, with an excuse. In the present case, I had much rather our ministers were bullies than heroes: no mortal likes the war. The court-majority lost thirteen of its former number at the beginning of the week, which put the Opposition into spirits; but, pursuing their motions on Friday, twelve of the thirteen were recovered.² Lord Onslow told me just now, at Madame de Boufflers's, that Lady Salisbury was brought to bed of a son and heir³ last night, two hours after she came from the Opera; and that Madame du Barry dined yesterday with the

¹ A splendid edition of the Fables of Dryden, ornamented with engravings, from the elegant and fascinating pencil of Lady Diana Beauclerc, was published in folio, in 1797.—E.

² On the 12th of April, a series of resolutions, moved by Mr. Grey, the object of which was to pronounce the armament against Russia inexpedient and unnecessary, were, after a warm debate, negatived by 252 against 172. A similar motion, made on the 15th, by Mr. Baker, was rejected by a majority of 254 to 162.—E.

³ James-Brownlow-William Gascoyne Cecil. In 1823, he succeeded his father as second Marquis of Salisbury.—E.

Prince of Wales, at the Duke of Queensberry's, at Richmond. Thus you have all my news, such as it is; and I flatter myself no English at Pisa or Florence can boast of better intelligence than you—but for you, should I care about Madame du Barry or my Lady Salisbury, or which of them lies in or lies out?

Bérkeley Square, Monday, April 18.

Oh! what a dear letter have I found, and from both at once; and with such a delightful bulletin! I should not be pleased with the idleness of the pencil, were it not owing to the chapter of health, which I prefer to everything. You order me to be particular about my own health: I have nothing to say about it, but that it is as good as before my last fit. Can I expect or desire more at my age? My ambition is to pass a summer, with you two established at Cliveden. I shall not reject more if they come; but one must not be presumptuous at seventy-three; and though my eyes, ears, teeth, motion, have still lasted to make life comfortable, I do not know that I should be enchanted if surviving any of them; and, having no desire to become a philosopher, I had rather be naturally cheerful than affectedly so: for patience I take to be only a resolution of holding one's tongue, and not complaining of what one feels—for does one feel or think the less for not owning it?

Though London increases every day, and Mr. Herschell has just discovered a new square or circus somewhere by the New Road in the Via Lactea, where the cows used to be fed, I believe you will think the town cannot hold all its inhabitants; so prodigiously the population is augmented. I have twice been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, (and the same has happened to Lady Ailesbury,) thinking there was a mob; and it was only nymphs and swains sauntering or trudging. Toother morning, *i. e.* at two o'clock, I went to see Mrs. Garrick and Miss Hannah More at the Adelphi, and was stopped five times before I reached Northumberland-house; for the tides of coaches, chariots, curricles, phaetons, &c. are endless. Indeed, the town is so extended, that the breed of chairs is almost lost; for Hercules and Atlas could not carry

anybody from one end of this enormous capital to the other. How magnified would be the error of the young woman at St. Helena, who, some years ago, said to a captain of an Indiaman, "I suppose London is very empty, when the India ships come out." Don't make me excuses, then, for short letters; nor trouble yourself a moment to lengthen them. You compare little towns to quiet times, which do not feed history; and most justly. If the vagaries of London can be comprised once a week in three or four pages of small quarto paper, and not always that, how should little Pisa furnish an equal export? When Pisa was at war with the rival republic of Milan, Machiavel was put to it to describe a battle, the slaughter in which amounted to one man slain; and he was trampled to death, by being thrown down and battered in his husk of complete armour; as I remember reading above fifty years ago at Florence.

Eleven at night.

Oh! mercy! I am just come from Mrs. Buller's, having left a very pleasant set at Lady Herries'¹—and for such a collection! Eight or ten women and girls, not one of whom I knew by sight; a German Count, as stiff and upright as the inflexible Dowager of Beaufort; a fat Dean and his wife, he speaking Cornish, and of having dined to-day at Lambeth; four young officers, friends of the boy Buller,² who played with one of them at tric-trac, while the others made with the Misses a still more noisy commerce; and not a creature but Mrs. Cholmondely, who went away immediately, and her son, who was speechless with the head-ache, that I was the least acquainted with: and, to add to my sufferings, the Count would talk to me of *les beaux arts*, of which he knows no more than an oyster. At last came in Mrs. Blair, whom I know as little; but she asked so kindly after you two, and was so anxious about your fall and your return, that I grew quite fond of her, and beg you would love her for my sake, as I do for yours. Good night!

I have this moment received a card from the Duchess-dow-

¹ The wife of the banker in St. James's-street.

² Mrs. Buller's only child.

ager of Ancaster, to summon me for to-morrow at three o'clock—I suppose to sign Lord Cholmondeley's marriage-articles with her daughter.¹ The wedding is to be this day sevensnight. Save me, my old stars, from wedding-dinners! But I trust they are not of this age. I should sooner expect Hymen to jump out of a curricule, and walk into the Duchess's dressing-room in boots and a dirty shirt.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, April 23, 1791.

TO-DAY, when the town is staring at the sudden resignation of the Duke of Leeds,² asking the reason, and gaping to know who will succeed him, I am come hither with an indifference that might pass for philosophy; as the true cause is not known, which it seldom is. Don't tell Europe; but I really am come to look at the repairs of Cliveden, and how they go on; not without an eye to the lilacs and the apple-blossoms: for even *self* can find a corner to wriggle into, though friendship may fit out the vessel. Mr. Berry may, perhaps, wish I had more political curiosity; but as I must return to town on Monday for Lord Cholmondeley's wedding, I may hear before the departure of the post, if the seals are given: for the Duke's reasons, should they be assigned, shall one be certain? His intention was not even whispered till Wednesday evening. The news from India, so long expected, are not *couleur de rose*, but *de sang*: a detachment has been defeated by Tippoo Saib, and Lord Cornwallis is gone to take the command of the army himself. Will the East be more propitious to him than the West?

The abolition of the slave-trade has been rejected by the House of Commons,³ though Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox united

¹ Lady Charlotte Bertie.

² Francis Godolphin Osborne, fifth Duke of Leeds. In 1776, he was appointed a lord of the bedchamber, and in 1783, secretary of state for foreign affairs. He was succeeded in the office by Lord Grenville.—E.

³ The numbers on the division were, for the abolition 88, against it 163.—E.

earnestly to carry it: but commerce chinked its purse, and that sound is generally prevalent with the majority; and humanity's tears, and eloquence's figures and arguments, had no more effect than on those patrons of liberty, the National Assembly of France; who, while they proclaim the rights of men, did not choose to admit the sable moiety of mankind to a participation of those benefits.

Captain Bowen has published a little pamphlet of affidavits, which prove that Gunnilda attempted to bribe her father's groom to perjure himself; but he begged to be excused. Nothing more appears against the mother, but that Miss pretended her mamma had an aversion to Lord Lorn, (an aversion to a Marquis!) and that she did not dare to acquaint so tender a parent with her lasting passion for him. Still I am persuaded that both the mother and the aunt were in the plot, whatever it was. I saw Lady Cecilia last night, and made all your speeches, and received their value in return for you.

Good Hannah More is killing herself by a new fit of benevolence, about a young girl with a great fortune, who has been taken from school at Bristol to Gretna Green, and cannot be discovered; nor the apothecary who stole her. Mrs. Garrick, who suspects, as I do, that Miss Europa is not very angry with Mr. Jupiter, had very warm words, 'a few nights ago, at the Bishop of London's, with Lady Beaumont; but I diverted the quarrel by starting the stale story of the Gunning. You know Lady Beaumont's eagerness: she is ready to hang the apothecary with her own hands; and he certainly is criminal enough. Poor Hannah lives with attorneys and Sir Sampson Wright;¹ and I have seen her but once since she came to town. Her ungrateful protégée, the milkwoman, has published her tragedy, and dedicated it to a patron as worthy as herself, the Earl-bishop of Derry.²

¹ In a letter, written on this day, Miss More says,—“My time has been literally passed with thief-takers, officers of justice, and such pretty kind of people.” The young lady, who was an heiress and only fourteen years of age, had been trepanned away from school. All the efforts to discover the victim proved fruitless; the poor girl having been betrayed into a marriage and carried to the Continent.—E.

² The Earl of Bristol; for an account of whom, see *antè*, p. 66.—E.

At night.

Well! our wedding is over very properly, though with little ceremony; for the men were in frocks and white waistcoats; most of the women in white, and no diamonds but on the Duke's wife; and nothing of ancient fashion but two bride-maids. The endowing purse, I believe, has been left off, ever since broad-pieces were called in and melted down. We were but eighteen persons in all, chiefly near relations of each side; and of each side a friend or two: of the first sort, the Greatheds. Sir Peter Burrell gave away the bride. The poor Duchess-mother wept excessively: she is now left quite alone; her two daughters married, and her other children dead—she herself, I fear, in a very dangerous way. She goes directly to Spa, where the new-married are to meet her. We all separated in an hour-and-a-half. The Elliot girl¹ was there, and is pretty: she rolls in the numerous list of my nephews and nieces.

I am now told that our Indian skirmish was a victory, and that Tippoo Saib, and all his cavalry and elephants, ran away; but sure I am, that the first impression made on me by those who spread the news, was not triumphant; nor can I enjoy success in that country, which we have so abominably usurped and plundered. You must wait for a new secretary of state till next post. The Duke of Leeds is said to have resigned from bad health. The Duc de Richelieu² and De Pienne, and Madame de St. Priest, are arrived here. Mr. Fawkener

¹ A natural daughter of Lord Cholmondeley.

² Armand-Emanuel du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu. He had just succeeded to the title, by the death of his father. In the preceding year, he had entered a volunteer into the service of Catherine the Second, and distinguished himself at the siege of Ismael, not more by his bravery than his humanity; as appears by the following anecdote recorded in the "*Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie*," tom. iii. p. 217:—"Je sauvai la vie à une fille de dix ans, dont l'innocence et la candeur formaient un contraste bien frappant avec la rage de tout ce qui m'environnait. En arrivant sur le bastion où commença le carnage, j'aperçus un groupe de quatre femmes égorgées, entre lesquelles cet enfant, d'une figure charmante, cherchait un asile contre la fureur de deux Kosaks qui étaient sur le point de la massacrer: ce spectacle m'attira bientôt, et je n'hésitai pas, comme on peut le croire, à prendre entre mes bras cette infortunée, que les barbares voulaient y poursuivre encore." Lord Byron has paraphrased the affecting incident in the eighth canto of *Don Juan*:—

does not go to Berlin till Wednesday: still the stocks do not believe in the war.

I have exhausted my gazette; and this being both Easter and Newmarket week, I may possibly have nothing to tell you by to-morrow se'nnight's post, and may wait till Friday se'nnight: of which I give you notice, lest you should think I have had a fall, and hurt my nose; which I know gives one's friend a dreadful alarm. Good night!

P. S. I never saw such a blotted letter: I don't know how you will read it. I am so earnest when writing to you two, that I omit half the words, and write too small; but I will try to mend.

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, May 12, 1791.

A LETTER from Florence (that of April 20th) does satisfy me about your nose—till I can see it with my own eyes; but I will own to you now, that my alarm at first went much farther. I dreaded lest so violent a fall upon rubbish might not have hurt your head; though all your letters since have proved how totally that escaped any danger. Yet your great kind-

“ Upon a taken bastion, where there lay
 Thousands of slaughtered men, a yet warm group
 Of murder'd women, who had found their way
 To this vain refuge, made the good heart droop
 And shudder ;—while, as beautiful as May,
 A female child of ten years tried to stoop
 And hide her little palpitating breast
 Amidst the bodies lull'd in bloody rest.
 Two villainous Cossacques pursued the child
 With flashing eyes, and weapons. * * *
 Don Juan raised his little captive from
 The heap, a moment more had made her tomb.”

In 1803, the Duke returned to Russia, and was nominated civil and military governor of Odessa; “and to his administration,” says Bishop Heber, “and not to any natural advantages, the town owes its prosperity.” On the restoration of Louis the Eighteenth, he was appointed first gentleman of the bed-chamber; and in 1815, president of the council and minister for foreign affairs. He finally retired from office in 1820, and died in 1822.—E.

ness in writing to me yourself so immediately did not tranquillize me, and only proved your good-nature—but I will not detail my departed fears, nor need I prove my attachment to you two. If you were really my wives, I could not be more generally applied to for accounts of you; of which I am proud. I should be ashamed if, at my age, it were a ridiculous attachment; but don't be sorry for having been circumstantial. My fears did not spring thence; nor did I suspect your not having told the whole—no; but I apprehended the accident might be worse than you knew yourself.

Poor Hugh Conway,¹ though his life has long been safe, still suffers at times from his dreadful blow, and has not yet been able to come to town: nor would Lord Chatham's humanity put his ship into commission; which made him so unhappy, that poor Horatia,² doating on him as she does, wrote to beg he might be employed; preferring her own misery in parting with him to what she saw him suffer. Amiable conduct! but, happily, her suit did not prevail.

I am not at all surprised at the private interviews between Leopold³ and C. I am persuaded that the first must and will take more part than he has yet seemed to do, and so will others too; but as speculations are but guesses, I will say no more on the subject now; nor of your English and Irish travellers, none of whom I know. I have one general wish, that you may be amused while you stay, by the natives of any nation: and I thank you a thousand times for confirming your intention of returning by the beginning of November; which I should not desire *coolly*, but from the earnest wish of putting you in possession of Cliveden while I live: which everybody would approve, at least, not wonder at (Mr. Batt, to whom I have communicated my intention, does extremely); and the rest would follow of course, as I had done the same for Mrs. Clive. I smiled at your making excuses for your double letter. Do you think I would not give twelve pence to hear

¹ Lord Hugh Seymour Conway, brother of the then Marquis of Hertford.

² Lady Horatia Waldegrave, his wife.

³ The Emperor Leopold, then at Florence; whither he had returned from Vienna, to inaugurate his son in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.—E.

more of you and your proceedings, than a single sheet would contain?

The Prince is recovered; that is all the domestic news, except a most memorable debate last Friday, in the House of Commons. Mr. Fox had most imprudently thrown out a panegyric on the French revolution.¹ His most considerable friends were much hurt, and protested to him against such sentiments. Burke went much farther, and vowed to attack these opinions. Great pains were taken to prevent such altercation, and the Prince of Wales is said to have written a dissuasive letter to Burke: but he was immovable; and on Friday, on the Quebec-bill, he broke out, and sounded a trumpet against the plot, which he denounced as carrying on here. Prodigious clamours and interruption arose from Mr. Fox's friends: but he, though still applauding the French, burst into tears and lamentations on the loss of Burke's friendship, and endeavoured to make atonement; but in vain, though Burke wept too. In short, it was the most affecting scene possible; and undoubtedly an *unique* one, for both the commanders were earnest and *sincere*.² Yesterday, a second act was expected; but mutual friends prevailed, that the contest

¹ In the course of his speech on the 15th of April, during the debate on the armament against Russia, Mr. Fox had said, that "he for one admired the new constitution of France, considered altogether, as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or country." As soon as he had sat down Mr. Burke rose, in much visible emotion; but was prevented from proceeding by the general cry of question. Mr. Fox regretted the injudicious zeal of those who would not suffer him to reply on the spot: "the contention," he said, "might have been fiercer and hotter, but the remembrance of it would not have settled so deep, nor rankled so long, in the heart."—E.

² With the debate of this day terminated a friendship which had lasted more than the fourth part of a century. Mr. Wilberforce, in his Diary of the 6th of May, states, that he had endeavoured to prevent the quarrel; and in a letter to a friend, on the following day, he speaks of "the shameful spectacle of last night; more disgraceful almost, and more affecting, than the rejection of my motion for the abolition of the slave trade—a long tried and close worldly connection of five-and-twenty-years trampled to pieces in the conflict of a single night!" The following anecdote, connected with this memorable evening, is related by Mr. Curwen, at that time member for Carlisle, in his Travels in Ireland:—"The most powerful feelings were manifested on the adjournment of the House. While I was waiting for my carriage, Mr. Burke came to me and requested, as the night was wet, I would set him down. As soon

should not be renewed: nay, on the same bill, Mr. Fox made a profession of his faith, and declared he would venture his life in support of the *present* constitution by King, Lords, and Commons. In short, I never knew a wiser dissertation, if the newspapers deliver it justly; and I think all the writers in England cannot give more profound sense to Mr. Fox than he possesses. I know no more particulars, having seen nobody this morning yet. What shall I tell you else? We have expected Mrs. Damer from last night; and perhaps she may arrive before this sets out to-morrow.

Friday morning, May 13th.

Last night we were at Lady Frederick Campbell's,—the usual cribbage party, Conways, Mount-Edgcumbes, Johnstones. At past ten Mrs. Damer was announced! Her parents ran down into the hall, and I scrambled down some of the stairs. She looks vastly well, was in great spirits, and not at all fatigued; though she came from Dover, had been twelve hours at sea from Calais, and had rested but four days at Paris from Madrid. We supped, and stayed till one o'clock; and I shall go to her as soon as I am dressed. Madrid and the Escorial she owns have gained her a proselyte to painting, which her *statuarism* had totally engrossed—in her, no wonder. Of Titian she had no idea, nor have I a just one, though great faith, as at Venice all his works are now coal-black: but Rubens, she says, amazed her, and that in Spain he has even grace. Her father, yesterday morning, from pain remaining still in his shoulder from his fall, had it examined by Dr. Hunter; and a little bone of the collar was found to be broken, and he must wear his arm for some time in a sling. Miss Boyle, I heard last night, had consented to marry Lord

as the carriage-door was shut, he complimented me on my being no friend to the revolutionary doctrines of the French; on which he spoke with great warmth for a few minutes, when he paused to afford me an opportunity of approving the view he had taken of those measures in the House. At the moment I could not help feeling disinclined to disguise my sentiments: Mr. Burke, catching hold of the check-string, furiously exclaimed, 'You are one of these people! set me down!' With some difficulty I restrained him;—we had then reached Charing-cross: a silence ensued, which was preserved till we reached his house in Gerard-street, when he hurried out of the carriage without speaking."—E.



G. P. Harding F.S.A. del

W. Greatbatch. sculp

THE HONBLE ANNE SEYMOUR DAMER.

FROM A DRAWING BY R. COSWAY F.R.S. IN THE COLLECTION AT STRAWBERRY HILL.

Henry Fitzgerald. I think they have both chosen well — but I have chosen better. Adieu! Care spouse!

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Thursday, May 19, 1791.

YOUR letter of the 29th, for which you are so good as to make excuses on not sending it to the post in time, did arrive but two days later than usual; and as it is now two months from the 16th of March, and I have had so many certificates of the prosperous state of your pretty nose, I attributed the delay to the elements, and took no panic. But how kindly punctual you are, when you charge yourself with an irregularity of two days! and when your letters are so charmingly long, and interest me so much in all you do! But make no more excuses. I reproach myself with occasioning so much waste of your time, that you might employ every hour; for it is impossible to see all that the Medicis had collected or encouraged in the loveliest little city, and in such beautiful environs—nor had I forgotten the Cascines, the only spot containing English verdure. Mrs. Damer is as well, if not better, than she has been a great while: her looks surprise everybody; to which, as she is tanned, her Spanish complexion contributes. She and I called, the night before last, on your friend Mrs. Cholmeley; and they are to make me a visit to-morrow morning, by their own appointment. At Dover Mrs. Damer heard the Gunings are there: here, they are forgotten.

You are learning perspective, to take views: I am glad. Can one have too many resources in one's-self? Internal armour is more necessary to your sex, than weapons to ours. You have neither professions, nor politics, nor ways of getting money, like men; in any of which, whether successful or not, they are employed. Scandal and cards you will both always hate and despise, as much as you do now; and though I shall not flatter Mary so much as to suppose she will ever equal the extraordinary talent of Agnes in painting, yet, as Mary,

like the scriptural Martha, is occupied in many things, she is quite in the right to add the pencil to her other amusements.

I knew the Duchesse de Brissac¹ a little, and but a little, in 1766. She was lively and seemed sensible, and had an excellent character. Poor M. de Nivernois!² to be deprived of that only remaining child too!—but, how many French one pities, and how many more one abhors! How dearly will even liberty be bought, (if it shall prove to be obtained, which I neither think it is or will be,) by every kind of injustice and violation of consciences! How little conscience can they have, who leave to others no option but between perjury and starving! The Prince de Chimay I do not know.

After answering the articles of yours, I shall add what I can of new. After several weeks spent in search of precedents for trials ceasing or not on a dissolution of Parliament, the Peers on Monday sat till three in the morning on the report; when the Chancellor and Lord Hawkesbury fought for the cessation, but were beaten by a large majority; which showed that Mr. Pitt³ has more weight (at present) in that House too, than—the diamonds of Bengal. Lord Hawkesbury protested. The trial recommences on Monday next, and has already cost the public fourteen thousand pounds; the accused, I suppose, much more.

¹ The Duc de Brissac was at this time commandant-general of Louis the Sixteenth's constitutional guard. In the following year he was denounced; and in the early days of September put to death at Versailles, for his attachment to his unfortunate sovereign.—E.

² The Duc de Nivernois, who, at this time, was employed about the person of Louis the Sixteenth, was denounced by the infamous Chaumette, and cast into prison in September 1793; where he remained till 1796. He died in 1798.—E.

³ In Mr. Wilberforce's Diary of the 22nd of December, there is the following entry:—"Hastings's impeachment question. Pitt's astonishing speech. This was almost the finest speech he ever delivered: it was one which you would say at once he never could have made if he had not been a mathematician. He put things by as he proceeded, and then returned to the very point from which he had started, with the most astonishing clearness. He had all the lawyers against him, but carried a majority of the House, mainly by the force of this speech. It pleased Burke exceedingly. 'Sir,' he said, 'the right honourable gentleman and I have often been opposed to one another, but his speech to-night has neutralized my opposition; nay, Sir, he has dulcified me.'" Life, vol. i. p. 286.—E.

The Countess of Albany¹ is not only in England, in London, but at this very moment, I believe, in the palace of St. James's — not restored by as rapid a revolution as the French, but, as was observed last night at supper at Lady Mount-Edgcumbe's, by that topsy-turvy-hood that characterizes the present age. Within these two months the Pope has been burnt at Paris; Madame du Barry, mistress of Louis Quinze, has dined with the Lord Mayor of London, and the Pretender's widow is presented to the Queen of Great Britain! She is to be introduced by her great-grandfather's niece, the young Countess of Ailesbury.² That curiosity should bring her hither, I do not quite wonder — still less, that she abhorred her husband; but methinks it is not very well-bred to his family, nor very sensible; but a new way of *passing eldest*.

Apropos: I hear there is a medal struck at Rome of her brother-in-law, as Henry the Ninth; which, as one of their Papal majesties was so abominably mean as to deny the royal title to the brother, though for Rome he had lost a crown, I did not know they allow *his* brother to assume. I should be much obliged to you if you could get me one of those medals in copper; ay, and one of his brother, if there was one with the royal title. I have the father's and mother's, and all the Popes', in copper; but *my* Pope, Benedict the Fourteenth, is the last, and therefore I should be glad of one of each of his successors, if you can procure and bring them with little trouble. I should not be sorry to have one of the Grand Duke and his father; but they should be in copper, not only for my suite, but they are sharper than in silver.

Thursday night.

Well! I have had an exact account of the interview of the two Queens, from one who stood close to them. The Dowager was announced as Princess of Stolberg. She was well-dressed,

¹ Louisa Maximiliana de Stolberg Gœdern, wife of the Pretender. After the death of Charles Edward in 1788, she travelled in Italy and France, and lived with her favourite, the celebrated Alfieri, to whom she is stated to have been privately married. She continued to reside at Paris, until the progress of the revolution compelled her to take refuge in England.—E.

² Lady Anne Rawdon, sister to the first Marquis of Hastings.

and not at all embarrassed. The King talked to her a good deal; but about her passage, the sea, and general topics: the Queen in the same way, but less. Then she stood between the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, and had a good deal of conversation with the former; who, perhaps, may have met her in Italy. Not a word between her and the Princesses: nor did I hear of the Prince; but he was there, and probably spoke to her. The Queen looked at her earnestly. To add to the singularity of the day, it is the Queen's birth-day. Another odd accident: at the Opera at the Pantheon, Madame d'Albany was carried into the King's box, and sat there. It is not of a piece with her going to court, that she seals with the royal arms. I have been told to-night, that you will not be able to get me a medal of the royal Cardinal, as very few were struck, and only for presents; so pray give yourself but little trouble about it.

Boswell has at last published his long-promised Life of Dr. Johnson, in two volumes in quarto. I will give you an account of it when I have gone through it. I have already perceived, that in writing the history of Hudibras, Ralpho has not forgot himself — nor will others, I believe, forget *him*!

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, May 26, 1791.

I AM rich in letters from you: I received that by Lord Elgin's courier first, as you expected, and its elder the next day. You tell me mine entertain you; tant mieux. It is my wish, but my wonder; for I live so little in the world, that I do not know the present generation by sight: for, though I pass by them in the streets, the hats with valences, the folds above the chin of the ladies, and the dirty shirts and shaggy hair of the young men, who have levelled nobility almost as much as the mobility in France have, have confounded all individuality. Besides, if I did go to public places and assemblies, which my going to roost earlier prevents, the bats and owls do not begin to fly abroad till far in the night, when they

begin to see and be seen. However, one of the empresses of fashion, the Duchess of Gordon, uses fifteen or sixteen hours of her four-and-twenty. I heard her journal of last Monday. She first went to Handel's music in the Abbey; she then clambered over the benches, and went to Hastings's trial in the Hall; after dinner, to the play; then to Lady Lucan's assembly; after that to Ranelagh, and returned to Mrs. Hobart's faro-table; gave a ball herself in the evening of that morning, into which she must have got a good way; and set out for Scotland the next day. Hercules could not have achieved a quarter of her labours in the same space of time. What will the Great Duke think of our Amazons, if he has letters opened, as the Emperor was wont! One of our Camillas,¹ but in a freer style, I hear, he saw (I fancy, just before your arrival); and he must have wondered at the familiarity of the dame, and the nincompoophood of her Prince. Sir William Hamilton is arrived — his Nymph of the Attitudes² was too prudish to visit the rambling peeress.

The rest of my letter must be literary; for we have no news. Boswell's book is gossiping;³ but, having numbers of

¹ Lady Craven; who was at this time in Italy with the Margravine of Anspach. Lord Craven died at Lausanne in September, and the lady was married to the Margrave in October following.—E.

² Miss Harte, married, in the following September, to Sir William Hamilton—the lady, the infatuated attachment to whom has been said to have been “the only cloud that obscured the bright fame of the immortal Nelson.” By the following passage in a letter, written by Romney the painter to Hayley the poet on the 19th of June, it will be seen, that she had not been many days in England, before a warm passion for her was engendered in the breast of the artist:—“At present, and for the greatest part of the summer, I shall be engaged in painting pictures from the *divine lady*: I cannot give her any other epithet; for I think her superior to all womankind. She asked me if you would not write my life: I told her you had begun it—then, she said, she hoped you would have much to say of her in the life; as she prides herself in being my model.”—E.

³ On the first appearance of his most interesting and instructive *Life of Dr. Johnson*, a considerable outcry was raised against poor Boswell. On the subject of this outcry, Mr. Croker, in the introduction to his valuable edition of the work, published in 1831, makes the following excellent observations:—“Whatever doubts may have existed as to the prudence or the propriety of the *original* publication—however naturally private confidence was alarmed, or individual vanity offended—the voices of criticism and complaint were soon drowned in the general applause. And, no wonder: the work combines within itself the four

proper names, would be more readable, at least by me, were it reduced from two volumes to one: but there are woful longueurs, both about his hero and himself, the *fidus Achates*; about whom one has not the smallest curiosity. But I wrong the original Achates: one is satisfied with his fidelity in keeping his master's secrets and weaknesses, which modern led-captains betray for their patron's glory and to hurt their own enemies; which Boswell has done shamefully, particularly

most entertaining classes of writing—biography, memoirs, familiar letters, and that assemblage of literary anecdotes, which the French have taught us to distinguish by the termination *Ana*. It was a strange and fortuitous concurrence, that one so prone to talk, and who talked so well, should be brought into such close contact and confidence with one so zealous and so able to record. Dr. Johnson was a man of extraordinary powers; but Mr. Boswell had qualities, in their own way, almost as rare. He united lively manners with indefatigable diligence, and the volatile curiosity of a man about town with the drudging patience of a chronicler. With a very good opinion of himself, he was quick in discerning, and frank in applauding, the excellencies of others. His contemporaries, indeed, not without some colour of reason, occasionally complained of him as vain, inquisitive, troublesome, and giddy; but his vanity was inoffensive—his curiosity was commonly directed towards laudable objects—when he meddled, he did so, generally, from good-natured motives—and his giddiness was only an exuberant gaiety, which never failed in the respect and reverence due to literature, morals, and religion; and posterity gratefully acknowledges the taste, temper, and talents with which he selected, enjoyed, and described that polished and intellectual society which still lives in his work, and without his work had perished!" Mr. Croker's edition of the work is the eleventh; and since its appearance, a twelfth, in ten pocket volumes, with embellishments, has been given to the world by Mr. Murray, of which thousands are understood to have been called for. Whenever Walpole, in the course of his correspondence, has had occasion to introduce the name of Boswell, he has uniformly spoken so disparagingly of him, that it is but justice to his memory to append to the above extract, a passage or two, in which other writers have recorded their estimation of him. Mr. Burke told Sir James Mackintosh, that "he thought Johnson appeared greater in Boswell's volumes than even in his own." Sir Walter Scott, speaking of the Doctor, says, "he yet is, in our mind's eye, a personification as lively as that of Siddons in *Lady Macbeth*, or Kemble in *Cardinal Wolsey*; and all this arises from his having found in Boswell such a biographer as no man but himself ever had." In the opinion of the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, Boswell was "the very prince of retail wits and philosophers," and his *Life of Johnson* is pronounced to be "one of the best books in the world—a great, a very great work:" while the *Quarterly Review* considers it "the richest dictionary of wit and wisdom any language can boast, and that to the influence of Boswell we owe, probably, three-fourths of what is most entertaining, as well as no inconsiderable portion of whatever is most instructive, in all the books of memoirs that have subsequently appeared."—E.

against Mrs. Piozzi, and Mrs. Montagu, and Bishop Percy. Dr. Blagden says justly, that it is a new kind of libel, by which you may abuse anybody, by saying some dead person said so and so of somebody alive. Often, indeed, Johnson made the most brutal speeches to living persons; for though he was good-natured at bottom, he was very ill-natured at top. He loved to dispute, to show his superiority. If his opponents were weak, he told them they were fools; if they vanquished him, he was scurrilous—to nobody more than to Boswell himself, who was contemptible for flattering him so grossly, and for enduring the coarse things he was continually vomiting on Boswell's own country, Scotland. I expected, amongst the excommunicated, to find myself, but am very gently treated. I never would be in the least acquainted with Johnson; or, as Boswell calls it, I had not a just value for him; which the biographer imputes to my resentment for the Doctor's putting bad arguments (purposely, out of Jacobitism,) into the speeches which he wrote fifty years ago for my father, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*; which I did not read then, or ever knew Johnson wrote till Johnson died, nor have looked at since. Johnson's blind Toryism and known brutality kept me aloof; nor did I ever exchange a syllable with him: nay, I do not think I ever was in a room with him six times in my days. Boswell came to me, said Dr. Johnson was writing the *Lives of the Poets*, and wished I would give him anecdotes of Mr. Gray. I said, very coldly, I had given what I knew to Mr. Mason. Boswell hummed and hawed, and then dropped, "I suppose you know Dr. Johnson does not admire Mr. Gray." Putting as much contempt as I could into my look and tone, I said, "Dr. Johnson don't!—humph!"—and with that monosyllable ended our interview. After the Doctor's death, Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Boswell sent an ambling circular-letter to me, begging subscriptions for a monument for him—the two last, I think, impertinently; as they could not but know my opinion, and could not suppose I would contribute to a monument for one who had endeavoured, poor soul! to degrade my friend's superlative poetry. I would not deign to write an answer; but sent down word by

my footman, as I would have done to parish officers with a brief, that I would not subscribe. In the two new volumes Johnson says, and very probably did, or is made to say, that Gray's poetry is *dull*, and that he was a *dull* man!¹ The same oracle dislikes Prior, Swift, and Fielding. If an elephant could write a book, perhaps one that had read a great deal would say, that an Arabian horse is a very clumsy ungraceful animal. Pass to a better chapter!

Burke has published another pamphlet² against the French Revolution, in which he attacks it still more grievously. The beginning is very good; but it is not equal, nor quite so injudicious as parts of its predecessor; is far less brilliant, as well as much shorter: but, were it ever so long, his mind overflows with such a torrent of images, that he cannot be tedious. His invective against Rousseau is admirable, just, and new.³ Voltaire he passes almost contemptuously. I wish he had dissected Mirabeau too; and I grieve that he has omitted the violation of the consciences of the clergy, nor stigmatized those universal plunderers, the National Assembly, who gorge themselves with eighteen livres a-day; which to many of them would, three years ago, have been astonishing opulence.

¹ Dr. Johnson's attack upon Gray was undoubtedly calculated to give great offence to Walpole:—"Sir, he was dull in company, dull in his closet, dull everywhere: he was dull in a new way, and that made many people think him great: he was a mechanical poet."—E.

² This was the "Letter from Mr. Burke to a Member of the National Assembly."—E.

³ "We have had," says Mr. Burke, "the great professor and founder of the philosophy of vanity in England. As I had good opportunities of knowing his proceedings, almost from day to day, he left no doubt on my mind that he entertained no principle, either to influence his heart or to guide his understanding, but vanity; with this vice he was possessed to a degree little short of madness. Benevolence to the whole species, and want of feeling for every individual with whom the professors come in contact, form the character of the new philosophy. Setting up for an unsocial independence, this their hero of vanity refuses the just price of common labour, as well as the tribute which opulence owes to genius, and which, when paid, honours the giver and the receiver: and then he pleads his beggary as an excuse for his crimes. He melts with tenderness for those only who touch him by the remotest relation; and then, without one natural pang, casts away, as a sort of offal and excrement, the spawn of his disgusting amours, and sends his children to the hospital of foundlings. The bear loves, licks, and forms her young; but bears are not philosophers."—E.

When you return, I shall lend you three volumes in quarto of another work,¹ with which you will be delighted. They are state-letters in the reigns of Henry the Eighth, Mary, Elizabeth, and James; being the correspondence of the Talbot and Howard families, given by a Duke of Norfolk to the Herald's-office; where they have lain for a century neglected, buried under dust, and unknown, till discovered by a Mr. Lodge, a genealogist, who, to gratify his passion, procured to be made a *poursuivant*. Oh! how curious they are! Henry seizes an alderman who refused to contribute to a benevolence; sends him to the army on the borders; orders him to be exposed in the front line; and if that does not do, to be treated with the utmost rigour of military discipline. His daughter Bess is not less a Tudor. The mean, unworthy treatment of the Queen of Scots is striking; and you will find how Elizabeth's jealousy of her crown and her avarice were at war, and how the more ignoble passion predominated. But the most amusing passage is one in a private letter, as it paints the awe of children for their parents a *little* differently from modern habitudes. Mr. Talbot, second son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was a member of the House of Commons, and was married. He writes to the Earl his father, and tells him, that a young woman of a very good character, has been recommended to him for chambermaid to his wife, and if his lordship does not disapprove of it, he will hire her. There are many letters of news, that are very entertaining too — but it is nine o'clock, and I must go to Lady Cecilia's.

Friday.

The Conways, Mrs. Damer, the Farrens, and Lord Mount-Edgcumbe supped at the Johnstones'. Lord Mount-Edgcumbe said excellently, that "Mademoiselle D'Eon is her own widow." I wish I had seen you both in your court-plis, at your presentation; but that is only one wish amongst a thousand.

¹ This was Lodge's "Illustrations of British History, Biography, and Manners, in the Reigns of Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Mary, Elizabeth, and James the First;" a work which has also been highly praised by Mr. Gifford, Sir Walter Scott, Sir Egerton Brydges, Mr. Park, and others.—E.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, June 2, 1791.

To the tune of the Cow with the crumpled Horn, &c.

“THIS is the note that nobody wrote.

“This is the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

“This is Ma’am Gunning, who was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

“This is Ma’am Bowen, to whom it was owing, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

“These are the Marquisses shy of the horn, who caused the maiden all for-*Lorn*, to become on a sudden so tattered and torn, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom, &c.

“These are the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes made the two Marquesses shy of the horn, and caused the maiden all for-*Lorn*, &c.

“This is the General somewhat too bold, whose head was so hot, though his heart was so cold; who proclaimed himself single before it was meet, and his wife and his daughter turned into the street, to please the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes,” &c.

This is not at all new; I have heard it once or twice imperfectly, but could not get a copy till now; and I think it will divert you for a moment, though the heroines are as much forgotten as Boadicea; nor have I heard of them since their arrival at Dover.

Well! I have seen Madame d’Albany, who has not a ray of royalty about her. She has good eyes and teeth; but I think can have had no more beauty than remains, except youth. She is civil and easy, but German and ordinary. Lady Ailesbury made a small assemblage for her on Monday, and my curiosity is satisfied. Mr. Conway and Lady A., Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, and Mrs. E. Hervey and Mrs. Hervey, breakfasted with me that morning at Strawberry, at

the desire of the latter, who had never been there; and whose commendations were so promiscuous, that I saw she did not at all understand the style of the place. The day was north-easterly and cold, and wanting rain; and I was not sorry to return into town. I hope in five months to like staying there much better. Mrs. Damer, who returned in such Spanish health, has already caught an English north-eastern cold; with pain in all her limbs, and a little fever, and yesterday was not above two hours out of bed. Her father came to me from her before dinner, and left her better; and I shall go to her presently; and, this not departing till to-morrow, I hope to give you a still more favourable account. These two days may boldly assume the name of June, without the courtesy of England. Such weather makes me wish myself at Strawberry, whither I shall betake myself on Saturday.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, June 8, 1791.

YOUR No. 34, that was interrupted, and of which the last date was of May 24th, I received on the 6th, and if I could find fault, it would be in the length; for I do not approve of your writing so much in hot weather, for, be it known to you ladies, that from the first of the month, June is not more June at Florence. My hay is crumbling away; and I have ordered it to be cut, as a sure way of bringing rain. I have a selfish reason, too, for remonstrating against long letters. I feel the season advancing, when mine will be piteous short; for what can I tell you from Twickenham in the next three or four months? Scandal from Richmond and Hampton Court, or robberies at my own door? The latter, indeed, are blown already. I went to Strawberry on Saturday, to avoid the birth-day crowd and squibs and crackers. At six I drove to Lord Strafford's, where his goods are to be sold by auction; his sister, Lady Anne,¹ intending to pull

¹ Lady Anne Wentworth, married to the Right Honourable Thomas Conolly.

down the house and rebuild it. I returned a quarter before seven; and in the interim between my Gothic gate and Ashe's nursery, a gentleman and gentlewoman, in a one-horse chair and in the broad face of the sun, had been robbed by a single highwayman, *sans* mask. Ashe's mother and sister stood and saw it; but having no notion of a robbery at such an hour in the high-road and before their men had left work, concluded it was an acquaintance of the robber's. I suppose Lady Cecilia Johnstone will not descend from her bedchamber to the drawing-room without life-guard men.

The Duke of Bedford¹ eclipsed the whole birth-day by his clothes, equipage, and servants: six of the latter walked on the side of the coach to keep off the crowd—or to tempt it; for their liveries were worth an argosie. The Prince was gorgeous too: the latter is to give Madame d'Albany a dinner. She has been introduced to Mrs. Fitzherbert. You know I used to call Mrs. Cosway's² concerts Charon's boat; now, methinks, London is so. I am glad Mrs. C. is with you; she is pleasing—but surely it is odd to drop a child and her husband and country, all in a breath!

I am glad you are *disfranchised* of the exiles. We have several, I am told, here; but I strictly confine myself to those I knew formerly at Paris, and who all are quartered on Richmond Green. I went to them on Sunday evening, but found them gone to Lord Fitzwilliam's, the next house to Madame de Boufflers', to hear his organ; whither I followed them, and returned with them. The Comtesse Emilie played on her harp; then we all united at *loto*. I went home at twelve, un-

¹ Francis, fifth Duke of Bedford. He died at Woburn, in March 1802, at the early age of thirty-one; upon which event, Mr. Fox, in moving for a new writ for Tavistock, in the room of his brother John, who succeeded to the dukedom, pronounced an eloquent eulogium on the deceased—the only speech he could ever be prevailed upon to revise for publication.—E.

² Maria Cosway, the wife of the eminent painter, and herself distinguished for her proficience both in painting and music. She was a native of Italy, but of English parentage; and being passionately fond of music, her soirées in Pall-Mall, and afterwards in Stratford-place, were attended by all the fashion of the town. In consequence of ill-health, accompanied by her brother, who had gained, as a student in painting, the Academy's gold medal, she had left England for Italy; where she remained about three years.—E.

robbed; and Lord Fitzwilliam, who asked much after you both, was to set out the next morning for Dublin, though intending to stay there but four days, and be back in three weeks.

I am sorry you did not hear all Monsieur de Lally Tolendal's¹ tragedy, of which I have had a good account. I like his tribute to his father's memory.² Of French politics you must be tired; and so am I. Nothing appears to me to promise their chaos duration; consequently, I expect more chaos, the sediment of which is commonly despotism. Poland ought to make the French blush—but that, they are not apt to do on any occasion. Let us return to Strawberry. The house of Sebright breakfasted there with me on Monday; the daughter had given me a drawing, and I owed her a civility. Thank you for reminding me of falls: in one sense I am more liable to them than when you left me, for I am sensibly much weaker since my last fit; but that weakness makes me move much slower, and depend more on assistance. In a word, there is no care I do not take of myself: my heart is set on installing you at Cliveden; and it will not be my fault if I do not preserve myself till then. If another summer is added, it

¹ The celebrated Count Lally de Tollendal. In 1789, he was one of the most eloquent members of the Constituent Assembly; but disapproving of the principles that prevailed, he retired into Switzerland. Gibbon, in a letter of the 15th of December of that year, says of him, "Lally is an amiable man of the world, and a poet: he passes the winter here; you know how much I prefer a quiet select society to a crowd of names and titles: what happy countries are England and Switzerland, if they know and preserve their happiness!" Having returned to France in 1792, he was sent to the Abbaye; whence he escaped during the massacres which took place in the prisons in September, and effected his retreat to England, where he found an asylum in the house of Lord Sheffield. On the restoration of the Bourbons, he was created a peer of France, and died in 1830. The subject of the tragedy above alluded to was the fall of the Earl of Strafford.—E.

² The unfortunate Count de Lally, governor of Pondicherry; who, on the surrender of the place to the English in 1761, was made prisoner of war, and sent to England. In the Chatham Correspondence, there is a letter from him to Mr. Pitt, written in English; in which he says, "When I shall have seen and heard here of Mr. Pitt all I have already read of him, I shall always remember I am his prisoner, and liberty to me, though a Frenchman, is of an inestimable value; therefore, I earnestly beg your interest with his Majesty to grant me leave to repair to my native soil." The desired permission was granted; but no sooner had he reached Paris, than he was thrown into the Bastille, and after being confined

will be happiness indeed — but I am not presumptuous, and count the days only till November. I am glad you, on your parts, repose till your journey commences, and go not into sultry crowded lodgings at the Ascension. I was at Venice in summer, and thought airing on stinking ditches pestilential, after enjoying the delicious nights on the Ponte di Trinità at Florence, in a linen night-gown and a straw hat, with improvisatori, and music, and the coffee-houses open with ices — at least, such were the customs fifty years ago !

The Duke of St. Albans has cut down all the brave old trees at Hanworth, and consequently reduced his park to what it issued from — Hounslow-heath : nay, he has hired a meadow next to mine, for the benefit of embarkation ; and there lie all the good old corpses of oaks, ashes, and chesnuts, directly before *your* windows, and blocking up one of my views of the river ! but so impetuous is the rage for building, that his grace's timber will, I trust, not annoy us long. There will soon be one street from London to Brentford ; ay, and from London to every village ten miles round ! Lord Camden has just let ground at Kentish Town for building fourteen

several years, brought to trial for treachery and found guilty. When his sentence was pronounced, “ the excess of his indignation,” says Voltaire, “ was equal to his astonishment : he inveighed against his judges, and, holding in his hand a pair of compasses, which he used for tracing maps in his prison, he struck it against his heart ; but the blow was not sufficient to take away life ; he was dragged into a dung-cart, with a gag in his mouth, lest, being conscious of his innocence, he should convince the spectators of the injustice of his fate.” Madame du Deffand, in giving to Walpole, on the 10th of January 1766, an account of this horrible scene, having stated, that the populace “ battait des mains pendant l'exécution,” he returned her an answer, in a high degree honourable to his moral feelings : — “ Ah ! Madame, Madame, quelles horreurs me racontez-vous là ! Qu'on ne dise jamais que les Anglais sont durs et féroces. Véritablement ce sont les Français qui le sont. Oui, oui, vous êtes des sauvages, des Iroquois, vous autres. On a bien massacré des gens chez nous, mais a-t-on jamais vu battre des mains pendant qu'on mettait à mort un pauvre malheureux, un officier général, qui avait langué pendant deux ans en prison ? un homme, enfin, si sensible à l'honneur, qu'il n'avait pas voulu se sauver ! si touché de la disgrâce, qu'il chercha à avaler les grilles de sa prison plutôt que de se voir exposé à l'ignominie publique ; et c'est exactement cette honnête pudeur qui fait qu'on le traîne dans un tombereau, et qu'on lui met un bâillon à la bouche comme au dernier des scélérats. Mon Dieu ! que je suis aise d'avoir quitté Paris avant cette horrible scène ! je me serais fait déchirer, ou mettre à la Bastille.” — E.

hundred houses — nor do I wonder; London is, I am certain, much fuller than ever I saw it. I have twice this spring been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, to inquire what was the matter, thinking there was a mob — not at all; it was only passengers. Nor is there any complaint of depopulation from the country: Bath shoots out into new crescents, circuses, and squares every year: Birmingham, Manchester, Hull, and Liverpool would serve any King in Europe for a capital, and would make the Empress of Russia's mouth water. Of the war with Catherine Slay-Czar I hear not a breath, and thence conjecture it is dozing into peace.

Mr. Dundas has kissed hands for secretary of state; and Bishop Barrington, of Salisbury, is transferred to Durham, which he affected not to desire, having large estates by his wife in the south — but from the triple-mitre downwards, it is almost always true, what I said some years ago, that "*nolo episcopari* is Latin for *I lie*." Tell it not in Gath that I say so; for I am to dine to-morrow at the Bishop of London's, at Fulham, with Hannah Bonner, my *imprimée*. This morning I went with Lysons the Reverend to see Dulwich College, founded in 1619 by Alleyn, a player, which I had never seen in my many days. We were received by a smart divine, *très bien poudré*, and with black satin breeches — but they are giving new wings and red satin breeches to the good old hostel too, and destroying a gallery with a very rich ceiling; and nothing will remain of ancient but the front, and an hundred mouldy portraits, among apostles, sibyls, and Kings of England. On Sunday I shall settle at Strawberry; and then woe betide you on post-days! I cannot make news without straw. The Johnstones are going to Bath, for the healths of both; so Richmond will be my only staple. Adieu, all three!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1791.

I PITY you! what a dozen or fifteen uninteresting letters are you going to receive! for here I am, unlikely to have

anything to tell you worth sending. You had better come back incontinently—but pray do not prophesy any more; you have been the death of our summer, and we are in close mourning for it in coals and ashes. It froze hard last night: I went out for a moment to look at my haymakers, and was starved. The contents of an English June are, hay and ice, orange-flowers and rheumatisms! I am now cowering over the fire. Mrs. Hobart had announced a rural breakfast at Sans-Souci last Saturday; nothing being so pastoral as a fat grandmother in a row of houses on Ham Common. It rained early in the morning: she dispatched post-boys, for want of Cupids and zephyrs, to stop the nymphs and shepherds who tend their flocks in Pall Mall and St. James's-street; but half of them missed the couriers and arrived. Mrs. Montagu was more splendid yesterday morning, and breakfasted seven hundred persons on opening her great room, and the room with the hangings of feathers. The King and Queen had been with her last week. I should like to have heard the orations she had prepared on the occasion. I was neither City-mouse nor Country-mouse. I did dine at Fulham on Saturday with the Bishop of London: Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Hannah More were there; and Dr. Beattie, whom I had never seen. He is quiet, simple, and cheerful, and pleased me. There ends my tale, this instant Tuesday! How shall I fill a couple of pages more by Friday morning! Oh! ye ladies on the Common, and ye uncommon ladies in London, have pity on a poor gazetteer, and supply me with eclogues or royal panegyrics! Moreover—or rather more under—I have had no letter from you these ten days, though the east wind has been as constant as Lord Derby. I say not this in reproach, as you are so kindly punctual; but as it stints me from having a single paragraph to answer. I do not admire specific responses to every article; but they are great resources on a dearth.

Madame de Boufflers is ill of a fever, and the Duchesse de Biron¹ goes next week to Switzerland;—mais qu'est que cela

¹ Amélie de Boufflers, wife of Armand-Louis de Gontaut, Duc de Biron, better known in England by the title of Duc de Lauzan. By a

vous fait? I must eke out this with a few passages that I think will divert you, from the heaviest of all books, Mr. Malone's Shakspeare, in ten thick octavos, with notes, that are an extract of all the opium that is spread through the works of all the bad play-wrights of that age. Mercy on the poor gentleman's patience! Amongst his other indefatigable researches, he has discovered some lists of effects in the custody of the property-man to the Lord Admiral's company of players, in 1598. Of those effects he has given eight pages—you shall be off for a few items; viz. "My Lord Caffé's [Caia-phas's] gerchen [jerkin] and his hoose [hose]; one rocke, one tombe, one Hellemought [Hell-mouth], two stepelles and one chyme of belles, one chaine of dragons, two coffines, one bulle's head, one vylter, one goste's crown, and one frame for the heading of black Jone; one payer of stayers for Fayeton, and bowght a robe for to goo invisabell." The pair of stairs for Phaeton reminds one of Hogarth's Strollers dressing in a barn, where Cupid on a ladder is reaching Apollo's stockings, that are hanging to dry on the clouds; as the steeples do of a story in *L'Histoire du Théâtre François*: Jodelet, who not only wrote plays, but invented the decorations, was to exhibit of both before Henry the Third. One scene was to represent a view of the sea, and Jodelet had bespoken two *rochers*; but not having time to rehearse, what did he behold enter on either side of the stage, instead of two *rochers*, but two *clochers*! Who knows but my Lord Admiral bought *them*?

letter from Madame Necker to Gibbon, the Duchesse appears to have been at Lausanne in October; but in the following September, "tempted," says Gibbon, "by some faint, and, I fear, fallacious hope of clemency to the women," she was induced to revisit France, and perished by the guillotine, in one of Robespierre's bloody proscriptions. See vol. v. pp. 133, 400. The Duc was entrusted with the command of the army of the republic in La Vendée; but, being reproached with having suffered Niort to be besieged and with not having seconded Westermann, he was denounced at the bar of the Convention, delivered over to the revolutionary tribunal, and condemned to death. He suffered on the 31st of December 1793, and his words upon the scaffold are said to have been, "I have been false to my God, my order, and my king: I die full of faith and repentance." See his "*Mémoires*," in two volumes 8vo. published in 1802.—E.

Berkeley Square, Thursday, 16th.

I am come to town for one night, having promised to be at Mrs. Buller's this evening with Mrs. Damer, and I believe your friend, Mrs. Cholmeley, whom I have seen two or three times lately and like much. Three persons have called on me since I came, but have not contributed a tittle of news to my journal. If I hear nothing to-night, this must depart, empty as it is, to-morrow morning, as I shall for Strawberry; I hope without finding a new mortification, as I did last time. Two companies had been to see my house last week; and one of the parties, as vulgar people always see with the ends of their fingers, had broken off the end of my invaluable Eagle's bill, and to conceal their mischief, had pocketed the piece. It is true it had been restored at Rome, and my comfort is, that Mrs. Damer can repair the damage — but did the fools know that? It almost provokes one to shut up one's house, when obliging begets injury!

Friday noon.

This moment I receive your 35th, to which I have nothing to answer, but that I believe Fox and Burke are not very cordial; though I do not know whether there has been any formal reconciliation or not. The Parliament is prorogued; and we shall hear no more of them, I suppose, for some months; nor have I learnt anything new, and am returning to Strawberry, and must finish.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1791.

WOE is me! I have not an atom of news to send you, but that the second edition of Mother Hubbard's Tale was again spoiled on Saturday last by the rain; yet she had an ample assemblage of company from London and the neighbourhood. The late Queen of France, Madame du Barry, was there; and the late Queen of England, Madame d'Albany, was not. The former, they say, is as much altered as her kingdom, and does not retain a trace of her former powers.

I saw her on her throne in the chapel of Versailles;¹ and, though then pleasing in face and person, I thought her *un peu passée*.

What shall I tell you more? that Lord Hawkesbury is added to the cabinet-council—*que vous importe?* and that Dr. Robertson has published a Disquisition into the Trade of the Ancients with India;² a sensible work—but that will be no news to you till you return. It was a peddling trade in those days. They now and then picked up an elephant's tooth, or a nutmeg, or one pearl, that served Venus for a pair of pendants, when Antony had toasted Cleopatra in a bumper of its fellow; which shows that a couple was imported:—but, alack! the Romans were so ignorant, that waiters from the Tres Tabernæ, in St. Apollo's-street, did not carry home sacks of diamonds enough to pave the Capitol—I hate exaggerations, and therefore I do not say, to pave the Appian Way. One author, I think, does say, that the wife of Fabius Pictor, whom he sold to a proconsul, did present Livia³ with an ivory bed, inlaid with Indian gold; but, as Dr. Robertson does not mention it, to be sure he does not believe the fact well authenticated.

It is an anxious moment with the poor French here: a strong notion is spread, that the Prince of Condé will soon make some attempt; and the National Assembly, by their pompous blustering, seem to dread it. Perhaps the moment is yet too early, till anarchy is got to a greater head; but as to the duration of the present revolution, I no more expect it, than I do the millennium before Christmas. Had the revo-

¹ See vol. v. p. 256.—E.

² This work, which was the last labour of the historian, was suggested by the perusal of Major Rennell's "Memoir of a Map of Hindostan." In sending a copy of it to Gibbon, he says, "No man had formed a more decided resolution of retreating early from public view, and of spending the eve of life in the tranquillity of professional and domestic occupations; but, directly in the face of that purpose, I step forth with a new work, when just on the brink of threescore and ten. My book has met with a reception beyond what the *spe lentus, pavidusque futuri*, dared to expect. I find, however, like other parents, that I have a partial fondness for this child of my old age; and cannot set my heart quite at rest, until I know your opinion of it."—E.

³ This alludes to the stories told at the time of an ivory bed, inlaid with gold, having been presented to Queen Charlotte by Mrs. Hastings, the wife of the governor-general of India.

lutionists had the sense and moderation of our ancestors, or of the present Poles, they might have delivered and blessed their country: but violence, injustice, and savage cruelty, tutored by inexperienced pedantry, produce offspring exactly resembling their parents, or turn their enemies into similar demons. Barbarity will be copied by revenge.

Lord Fitzwilliam has *flown* to Dublin and back. He returned to Richmond on the fourteenth day from his departure, and the next morning set out for France: no courier can do more. In my last, the description of June for *orange-flowers*, pray read *roses*: the east winds have starved all the former; but the latter, having been settled here before the wars of York and Lancaster, are naturalized to the climate, and reckon not whether June arrives in summer or winter. They blow by their own old-style almanacks. Madame d'Albany might have found plenty of white ones on her own tenth of June; but, on that very day, she chose to go to see the King in the House of Lords, with the crown on his head, proroguing the Parliament.¹ What an odd rencontre! Was it philosophy or insensibility? I believe it is certain that her husband was in Westminster-hall at the coronation.

The patriarchess of the Methodists, Lady Huntingdon, is dead. Now she and Whitfield are gone, the sect will probably decline: a second crop of apostles seldom acquire the influence of the founders. To-day's paper declares upon its say-so, that Mr. Fawkener is at hand, with Catherine Slay-Czar's²

¹ "The Bishop of London," writes Hannah More, "carried me to hear the King make his speech in the House of Lords. As it was quite new to me, I was very well entertained; but the thing that was most amusing was to see, among the ladies, the Princess of Stolberg, Countess of Albany, wife to the Pretender, sitting just at the foot of that throne, which she might once have expected to have mounted; and what diverted the party, when I put them in mind of it, was, that it happened to be the 10th of June, *the Pretender's birth-day*. I have the honour to be very much like her; and this opinion was confirmed yesterday, when we met again."—Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 343.—E.

² Walpole rarely makes mention of Catherine without an allusion to the murder of the Czar Peter. In a letter written to Madame du Deffand, in 1769, he thus indignantly denounces Voltaire's applauses of the Empress:—"Voltaire me fait horreur avec sa Catérine; le beau sujet de badinage que l'assassinat d'un mari, et l'usurpateur de son trône! Il n'est pas mal, dit-il, qu'on ait une faute à réparer: eh! comment réparer un meurtre? Est-ce en retenant des poètes à ses gages?"

acquiescence to our terms; but I have not entire faith in a precursor on such an occasion, and from Holland too. It looks more like a courier to the stocks; and yet I am in little expectation of a war, as I believe we are boldly determined to remain at peace. And now my pen is quite dry—you are quite sure not from laziness, but from the season of the year, which is very anti-correspondent. Adieu!

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, July 12, 1791.

I HAD had no letter from you for ten days, I suppose from west winds; but did receive one this morning, which had been three weeks on the road: and a charming one it was. Mr. Batt.—who dined with me yesterday, and stayed till after breakfast to-day,—being here, I read part of it to him; and he was as much delighted as I was with your happy quotation of *incedit Regina*. If I could spare so much room, I might fill this paper with all he said of you both, and with all the friendly kind things he begged me to say to both from him. Last night I read to him certain Reminiscences; and this morning he slipped from me, and walked to Cliveden, and hopes to see it again much more agreeably. I hope so too, and that I shall be with him.

I wish there were not so many fêtes at Florence; they are worse for you both than Italian sultriness: but, if you do go to them, I am glad you have more northern weather. News I have none, but that Calonne arrived in London on Sunday: you may be sure I do not know for what. In a word, I have no more opinion of his judgment than of his integrity. Now I must say a syllable about myself; but don't be alarmed! It is not the gout; it is worse: it is the rheumatism, which I have had in my shoulder ever since it attended the gout last December. It was almost gone till last Sunday, when, the

en payant des historiens mercenaires, et en soudoyant des philosophes ridicules à mille lieues de son pays? Ce sont ces ames viles qui chantent un Auguste, et se taisent sur ses prescriptions.”—E.

Bishop of London preaching a charity sermon in our church, whither I very, very seldom venture to hobble, I would go to hear him; both out of civility, and as I am very intimate with him. The church was crammed; and, though it rained, every window was open. However, at night I went to bed; but at two I waked with such exquisite pain in my rheumatic right shoulder, that I think I scarce ever felt greater torture from the gout.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, July 26, 1791.

TEN months are gone of the longest year that ever was born—a baker's year, for it has thirteen months to the dozen! As our letters are so long interchanging, it is not beginning too early to desire you will think of settling the stages to which I must direct to you in your route. Nay, I don't know whether it is not already too late: I am sure it will be, if I am to stay for an answer to this; but I hope you will have thought on it before you receive this. I am so much recovered as to have been abroad. I cannot say my arm is glib yet; but, if I waited for the total departure of the rheumatism, I might stay at home till the national debt is paid. My fair writing is a proof of my lameness: I labour as if I were engraving; and drop no words, as I do in my ordinary hasty scribbling.

Lady Cecilia tells me, that her nephew, Mr. West,¹ who was with you at Pisa, declares he is in love with you both; so I am not singular. You two may like to hear this, though no novelty to you; but it will not satisfy Mr. Berry, who will be impatient for news from Birmingham: but there are no more, nor any-whence else. There has not been another riot in any of the three kingdoms. The villain Paine came over for the Crown and Anchor;² but, finding that his pamphlet had

¹ The Honourable Septimus West, uncle of the present Earl of Delawarr. He died of consumption in October 1793.

² The great dinner at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in celebration of the anniversary of the French revolution.—E.

not set a straw on fire, and that the 14th of July was as little in fashion as the ancient gunpowder-plot, he dined at another tavern with a few quaking conspirators; and probably is returning to Paris, where he is engaged in a controversy with the Abbé Sieyes, about the *plus* or *minus* of rebellion. The rioters in Worcestershire, whom I mentioned in my last, were not a detachment from Birmingham, but volunteer incendiaries from the capital; who went, *according to the rights of men*, with the mere view of plunder, and threatened gentlemen to burn their houses, if not ransomed. Eleven of these disciples of Paine are in custody; and Mr. Merry, Mrs. Barbauld, and Miss Helen Williams will probably have subjects for elegies. Deborah and Jael, I believe, were invited to the Crown and Anchor, and had let their nails grow accordingly: but, somehow or other, no *poissonnières* were there, and the two prophetesses had no opportunity that day of exercising their talents or talons. Their French allies, cock and hen, have a fairer field open; and the Jacobins, I think, will soon drive the National Assembly to be better royalists than ever they were, in self-defence.

You have indeed surprised me by your account of the strange credulity of poor King Louis's escape *in safety*! In these villages we heard of his flight late in the evening, and, the very next morning, of his being retaken.¹ Much as he, at least the Queen, has suffered, I am persuaded the adventure has hastened general confusion, and will increase the royal party; though perhaps their Majesties, for their personal safeties, had better have awaited the natural progress of anarchy. The enormous deficiencies of money, and the total insubordination of the army, both apparent and uncontradicted, from the reports made to the National Assembly, show what is coming. Into what such a chaos will subside, it would be silly to attempt to guess. Perhaps it is not wiser in the exiles to expect to live to see a re-settlement in their favour. One thing I have for these two years thought probable to

¹ The flight of the Royal Family of France to, and return from, Varennes.

arrive—a division, at least, a dismemberment, of France. Despotism could no longer govern so unwieldy a machine; a republic would be still less likely to hold it together. If foreign powers should interfere, they will take care to pay themselves with what is *à leur bienséance*; and that, in reality, would be serving France too. So much for my speculations! and they have never varied. We are so far from intending to new-model our government and dismiss the Royal Family, annihilate the peerage, cashier the hierarchy, and lay open the land to the first occupier, as Dr. Priestley, and Tom Paine, and the Revolution Club humbly proposed, that we are even encouraging the breed of princes. It is generally believed that the Duke of York is going to marry the Princess of Prussia, the King's daughter by his first wife, and his favourite child. I do not affirm it; but many others do.¹

Thursday night, late.

Lady Di. has told me an extraordinary fact. Catherine Slay-Czar sent for Mr. Fawkener,² and desired he will order for her a bust of Charles Fox; and she will place it between Demosthenes and Cicero (pedantry she learnt from her French authors, and which our school-boys would be above using); for his eloquence has saved two great nations from a war—by his opposition to it, *s'entend*: so the peace is no doubt made. She could not have addressed her compliment worse than to Mr. Fawkener, sent by Mr. Pitt, and therefore so addressed; and who, of all men, does not love Mr. Fox: and Mr. Fox, who has no vain-glory, will not care a straw for the flattery, and will understand it too. Good night!

¹ The marriage of the Duke of York with Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherine, eldest daughter of the King of Prussia, was solemnized, first in Prussia, on the 29th of September, and again in England, on the 23rd of November 1791. For Walpole's account of her Royal Highness's visit to Strawberry Hill, see his letter to the Miss Berrys of the 25th of September 1793.—E.

² Mr. Fawkener was the son of Sir Everard Fawkener. He was one of the principal clerks of the privy council, and had been sent on a secret mission to Russia.—E.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, August 17, 1791.

No letter from Florence this post, though I am wishing for one every day! The illness of a friend is bad, but is augmented by distance. Your letters say you are quite recovered; but the farther you are from me, the oftener I want to hear that recovery repeated: and any delay in hearing revives my apprehensions of a return of your fever. I am embarrassed, too, about your plan. It grows near to the time you proposed beginning your journey. I do not write with any view to hastening that, which I trust will entirely depend on the state of your health and strength; but I am impatient to know your intentions: in short, I feel that, from this time to your arrival, my letters will grow very tiresome. I have heard to-day, that Lord and Lady Sheffield, who went to visit Mr. Gibbon at Lausanne, met with great trouble and impertinence at almost every post in France. In Switzerland there is a furious spirit of democracy, or demonocracy. They made great rejoicings on the re-capture of the King of France. Oh! why did you leave England in such a turbulent era! When will you sit down on the quiet banks of the Thames?

Wednesday night.

Since I began my letter, I have received yours of the 2nd, two days later than usual; and a most comfortable one it is. My belief and my faith are now of the same religion. I do believe you quite recovered. You, in the mean time, are talking of my rheumatism—quite an old story. Not that it is gone, though the pain is. The lameness in my shoulder remains, and I am writing on my lap: but the complaint is put upon the establishment; like old servants, that are of no use, fill up the place of those that could do something, and yet still remain in the house.

I know nothing new, public or private, that is worth telling. The stocks are transported with the pacification with Russia, and do not care for what it has cost to bully the Em-

press to no purpose; and say, we can afford it. Nor can Paine and Priestley persuade them that France is much happier than we are, by having ruined itself. The poor French here are in hourly expectation of as rapid a counter-revolution as what happened two years ago. Have you seen the King of Sweden's letter to his minister, enjoining him to look dismal, and to take care not to be knocked on the head for so doing? It deserves to be framed with M. de Bouillé's *bravado*.¹ You say you will write me longer letters when you know I am well. Your recovery has quite the contrary effect on me: I could scarce restrain my pen while I had apprehensions about you; now you are well, the goose-quill has not a word to say. One would think it had belonged to a physician. I shall fill my vacuum with some lines that General Conway has sent me, written by I know not whom, on Mrs. Harte, Sir William Hamilton's pantomime mistress, or wife, who acts all the antique statues in an Indian shawl. I have not seen her yet, so am no judge; but people are mad about her wonderful expression, which I do not conceive; so few antique statues having any expression at all, nor being designed to have it. The Apollo has the symptoms of dignified anger;² the Laocoon and his sons, and Niobe and her family, are all expression;³ and a few more: but what do the

¹ "The Marquis de Bouillé, in order to draw upon himself the indignation of the Assembly, addressed to it a letter, which might be called mad, but for the generous motive which dictated it. He avowed himself the sole author of the King's journey, though, on the contrary, he had opposed it. He declared, in the name of the Sovereign, that Paris should be responsible for the safety of the Royal Family, and that the slightest injury offered to them should be signally avenged. The Assembly winked at this generous *bravado*, and threw the whole blame on Bouillé; who had nothing to fear, for he was already abroad." Thiers, vol. i. p. 197.—E.

² "In his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity." Byron.—E.

³ "Go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending:—Vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long euvenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp." Ibid.—E.

Venuses, Floras, Hercules, and a thousand others tell, but the magic art of the sculptor, and their own graces and proportions?

I have been making up some pills of patience, to be taken occasionally, when you have begun your journey, and I do not receive your letters regularly; which may happen when you are on the road. I recommend you to St. James of Compost-*antimony*, to whom St. Luke was an ignorant quack. Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, Tuesday, Aug. 23, 1791.

I AM come to town to meet Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury; and, as I have no letter from you yet to answer, I will tell you how agreeably I have passed the last three days; though they might have been improved had you shared them, as I wished, and as I *sometimes* do wish. On Saturday evening I was at the Duke of Queensberry's (at Richmond, *s'entend*) with a small company: and there were Sir William Hamilton and Mrs. Harte; who, on the 3rd of next month, previous to their departure, is to be made Madame l'Envoyée à Naples, the Neapolitan Queen having promised to receive her in that quality. Here she cannot be presented, where only such over-virtuous wives as the Duchess of Kingston and Mrs. Hastings—who could go with a husband in each hand—are admitted. Why the Margravine of Anspach, with the same pretensions, was not, I do not understand; perhaps she did not attempt it. But I forget to retract, and make *amende honorable* to Mrs. Harte. I had only heard of her attitudes; and those, in dumb show, I have not yet seen. Oh! but she sings admirably; has a very fine, strong voice; is an excellent buffa, and an astonishing tragedian. She sung Nina in the highest perfection; and there her attitudes were a whole theatre of grace and various expressions.

The next evening I was again at Queensberry-house, where the Comtesse Emilie de Boufflers played on her harp, and the Princesse di Castalcigala, the Neapolitan minister's wife, danced one of her country dances, with castanets, very prettily,

with her husband. Madame du Barry was there too, and I had a good deal of frank conversation with her about Monsieur de Choiseul; having been at Paris at the end of his reign and the beginning of hers, and of which I knew so much by my intimacy with the Duchesse de Choiseul.

On Monday was the boat-race. I was in the great room at the Castle, with the Duke of Clarence, Lady Di., Lord Robert Spencer,¹ and the House of Bouverie,² to see the boats start from the bridge to Thistleworth, and back to a tent erected on Lord Dysart's meadow, just before Lady Di.'s windows; whither we went to see them arrive, and where we had breakfast. For the second heat, I sat in my coach on the bridge; and did not stay for the third. The day had been coined on purpose, with my favourite south-east wind. The scene, both up the river and down, was what only Richmond upon earth can exhibit. The crowds on those green velvet meadows and on the shores, the yachts, barges, pleasure and small boats, and the windows and gardens lined with spectators, were so delightful, that when I came home from that vivid show, I thought Strawberry looked as dull and solitary as a hermitage. At night there was a ball at the Castle, and illuminations, with the Duke's cypher, &c. in coloured lamps, as were the houses of his Royal Highness's tradesmen. I went again in the evening to the French ladies on the Green, where there was a bonfire; but, you may believe, not to the ball.

Well! but you, who have had a fever with *fêtes*, had rather hear the history of the new *soi-disante* Margravine. She has been in England with her foolish Prince, and not only notified their marriage to the Earl³ her brother, who did not receive it propitiously, but his Highness informed his lordship by a letter, that they have an usage in his country of taking a wife with the left hand; that he had espoused his lordship's sister in that manner; and intends, as soon as she shall be a widow,⁴

¹ Brother to Lady Diana Beauclerc.

² The family of the Hon. Edward Bouverie, brother to the Earl of Radnor.

³ Of Berkeley.

⁴ Lady Craven became a widow in the following month, and was married to the Margrave of Anspach in October. See *antè*, p. 274.

to marry her with his right hand also. The Earl replied, that he knew she was married to an English peer, a most respectable man, and can know nothing of her marrying any other man; and so they are gone to Lisbon. Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 11, 1791.

THOUGH I am delighted to know, that of thirteen doleful months but two remain, yet how full of anxiety will they be! You set out in still hot weather, and will taste very cold before you arrive! Accidents, inns, roads, mountains, and the sea, are all in my map!—but I hope no slopes to be run down, no *fêtes* for a new Grand Duke. I should dread your meeting armies, if I had much faith in the counter-revolution said to be on the anvil. The French ladies in my *vicinage* (a word of the late Lord Chatham's coin) are all hen-a-hoop on the expectation of a grand alliance formed for that purpose, and I believe think they shall be at Paris before you are in England; but I trust one is more certain than the other. That folly and confusion increase in France every hour, I have no doubt, and absurdity and contradictions as rapidly. Their constitution, which they had voted should be immortal and unchangeable, — though they deny that anything antecedent to themselves ought to have been so,—they are now of opinion must be revised at the commencement of next century; and they are agitating a third constitution, before they have thought of a second, or finished the first! Bravo! In short, Louis Onze could not have laid deeper foundations for despotism than these levellers, who have rendered the name of liberty odious — the surest way of destroying the dear essence!

I have no news for you, but a sudden match patched up for Lord Blandford, with a little more art than was employed by the fair Gunnilda. It is with Lady Susan Stewart, Lord Galloway's daughter, contrived by and at the house of her relation and Lord Blandford's friend, Sir Henry Dashwood; and

it is to be so instantly, that her grace, his mother, will scarce have time to forbid the bans.¹

We have got a codicil to summer, that is as delightful as, I believe, the seasons in the Fortunate Islands. It is pity it lasts but till seven in the evening, and then one remains with a black chimney for five hours. I wish the sun was not so fashionable as never to come into the country till autumn and the shooting season; as if Niobe's children were not hatched and fledged before the first of September. Apropos, Sir William Hamilton has actually married his Gallery of Statues, and they are set out on their return to Naples. I am sorry I did not see her attitudes, which Lady Di. (a tolerable judge!) prefers to anything she ever saw: still I do not much care. I have at this moment a commercial treaty with Italy, and hope in two months to be a greater gainer by the exchange; and I shall not be so generous as Sir William, and exhibit my wives in pantomime to the public. 'Tis well I am to have the originals again; for that wicked swindler, Miss Foldson, has not yet given up their portraits.

The newspapers are obliged to live upon the diary of the King's motions at Weymouth. Oh! I had forgot. Lord Cornwallis has taken Bangalore by storm, promises Serin-gapatam, and Tippoo Saib has sued for peace. Diamonds will be as plenty as potatoes, and gold is as common as copper-money in Sweden. I was told last night, that a director of the Bank affirms, that two millions five hundred thousand pounds, in specie, have already been remitted or brought over hither from France since their revolution.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night late, Sept. 16, 1791.

As I am constantly thinking of you two, I am as constantly writing to you, when I have a vacant quarter of an hour. Yesterday was red-lettered in the almanacks of Straw-

¹ The marriage took place four days after the date of this letter.—E.

berry and Cliveden, supposing you set out towards them, as you intended; the sun shone all day, and the moon at night, and all nature, for three miles round, looked gay. Indeed, we have had nine or ten days of such warmth and serenity, (here called *heat*,) as I scarce remember when the year begins to have grey, or rather yellow hairs. All windows have been flung up again and fans ventilated; and it is true that hay-carts have been transporting hay-cocks, from a second crop, all the morning from Sir Francis Basset's island opposite to my windows. The setting sun and the long autumnal shades enriched the landscape to a Claude Lorrain. Guess whether I hoped to see such a scene next year: if I do not, may you! at least, it will make you talk of me! The gorgeous season and poor partridges, I hear, have emptied London entirely, and yet Drury-lane is removed to the Opera-house. Do you know that Mrs. Jordan is acknowledged to be Mrs. Ford, and Miss Brunton¹ Mrs. Merry, but neither quits the stage? The latter's captain, I think, might quit his poetic profession, without any loss to the public. My gazettes will have kept you so much *au courant*, that you will be as ready for any conversation at your return, as if you had only been at a watering-place. In short, *à votre intention*, and to make my letters as welcome as I can, I listen to and bring home a thousand things, which otherwise I should not know I heard.

Lord Buchan is screwing out a little ephemeral fame from instituting a jubilee for Thomson.² I fear I shall not make my court to Mr. Berry, by owning I would not give this

¹ An actress of considerable talent and personal attractions. Her sister, also a popular actress, was married, in 1807, to the Earl of Craven.—E.

² The jubilee took place on the 22nd of September, at Ednam-hill. On crowning the first edition of "The Seasons" with a wreath of bays, Lord Buchan delivered an eulogy on the poet, containing the following singular passage:—"I think myself happy to have this day the honour of endeavouring to do honour to the memory of Thomson, which has been profanely touched by the rude hand of Samuel Johnson; whose fame and reputation indicate the decline of taste in a country that, after having produced an Alfred, a Wallace, a Bacon, a Napier, a Newton, a Buchanan, a Milton, a Hampden, a Fletcher, and a Thomson, can submit to be bullied by an overbearing pedant."—E.

last week's fine weather for all the four Seasons in blank verse. There is more nature in six lines of *L'Allegro* and *Penseroso*, than in all the laboured imitations of Milton. What is there in Thomson of original?

Berkeley Square, Monday night, 19th.

You have alarmed me exceedingly, by talking of returning through France, against which I thought myself quite secure, or I should not have pressed you to stir, yet. I have been making all the inquiries I could amongst the foreign ministers at Richmond, and I cannot find any belief of the march of armies towards France. Nay, the Comte d'Artois is said to be gone to Petersburg; and he must bring back forces in a balloon, if he can be time enough to interrupt your passage through Flanders. One thing I must premise, if, which I deprecate, you should set foot in France; I beg you to burn, and not bring a scrap of paper with you. Mere travelling ladies, as young as you, I know have been stopped and rifled, and detained in France to have their papers examined; and one was rudely treated, because the name of a French lady of her acquaintance was mentioned in a private letter to her, though in no political light. Calais is one of the worst places you can pass; for, as they suspect money being remitted through that town to England, the search and delays there are extremely strict and rigorous. The pleasure of seeing you sooner would be bought infinitely too dear by your meeting with any disturbance; as my impatience for your setting out is already severely punished by the fright you have given me. One charge I can wipe off; but it were the least of my faults. I never thought of your settling at Cliveden in November, if your house in town is free. All my wish was, that you would come for a night to Strawberry, and that the next day I might put you in possession of Cliveden. I did not think of engrossing you from all your friends, who must wish to embrace you at your return.

Tuesday.

I am told that on the King's acceptance of the constitution,

there is a general amnesty published, and passports taken off. If this is true, the passage through France, for mere foreigners and strangers, may be easier and safer; but be assured, of all, I would not embarrass your journey unnecessarily; but, for Heaven's sake! be well informed. I advise nothing: I dread everything where your safeties are in question, and I hope Mr. Berry is as timorous as I am. My very contradictions prove the anxiety of my mind, or I should not torment those I love so much; but how not love those who sacrifice so much for me, and who, I hope, forgive all my unreasonable inconsistencies. Adieu! adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 25, 1791.

How I love to see my numeros increase.¹ I trust they will not reach sixty! In short, I try every nostrum to make absence seem shorter; and yet, with all my conjuration, I doubt the next five or six weeks will, like the harvest-moon, appear of a greater magnitude than all the moons of the year, its predecessors. I wish its successor, the hunter's-moon, could seem less in proportion; but, on the contrary! I hate travelling, and roads, and inns myself: while you are on your way, I shall fancy, like Don Quixote, that every inn is the castle of some necromancer, and every windmill a giant; and these will be my smallest terrors.

Whether this will meet or follow you, I know not. Yours of the 5th of this month arrived yesterday, but could not direct me beyond Basle. I must, then, remain still in ignorance whether you will take the German or French route. It is now, I think, certain that there will no attempt against France be made this year. Still I trust that you will not decide till you are assured that you may come through France without trouble or molestation; and I still prefer Germany, though it will protract your absence.

¹ Mr. Walpole numbered all the letters written by him to the Miss Berrys during their residence abroad.—E.

I am sorry you were disappointed of going to Valombroso. Milton has made everybody wish to have seen it; which is my wish, for though I was thirteen months at Florence (at twice), I never did see it. In fact, I was so tired of *seeing* when I was abroad, that I have several of these pieces of repentance on my conscience, when they come into my head; and yet I saw too much, for the quantity left such a confusion in my head, that I do not remember a quarter clearly. Pictures, statues, and buildings were always so much my passion, that, for the time, I surfeited myself; especially, as one is carried to see a vast deal that is not worth seeing. They who are industrious and correct, and wish to forget nothing, should go to Greece, where there is nothing left to be seen, but that ugly pigeon-house, the Temple of the Winds, that fly-cage, Demosthenes's lanthorn, and one or two fragments of a portico, or a piece of a column crushed into a mud wall; and with such a morsel, and many quotations, a true classic antiquary can compose a whole folio, and call it *Ionian Antiquities*!¹ Such gentry do better still when they journey to Egypt to visit the pyramids, which are of a form which one would think nobody could conceive without seeing, though their form is all that is to be seen; for it seems that even prints and measures do not help one to an idea of magnitude: indeed, measures do not; for no two travellers have agreed on the measures. In that scientific country, too, you may guess that such or such a vanished city stood within five or ten miles of such a parcel of land; and when you have conjectured in vain, at what some rude birds, or rounds or squares, on a piece of an old stone may have signified, you may amuse your readers with an account of the rise of the Nile, some feats of the Mamelukes, and finish your work with doleful tales of the robberies of the wild Arabs. One benefit does arise from travelling: it cures one of liking what is worth seeing; especially if what you have seen is bigger than what you do see. Thus, Mr. Gilpin, having visited all

¹ The first volume of "*Ionian Antiquities*," in imperial folio, edited by R. Chandler, N. Revett, and W. Pais, was published in 1769; a second, edited by the Society of Dilettanti, appeared in 1797.—E.

the lakes, could find no beauty in Richmond-hill. If he would look through Mr. Herschell's telescope at the profusion of worlds beyond worlds, perhaps he would find out that Mount Atlas is but an ant-hill; and that the *sublime and beautiful* may exist separately.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1791.

YOUR letter was most welcome, as yours always are; and I answer it immediately, though our post comes in so late that this will not go away till to-morrow. Nay, I write, though I shall see you on Sunday, and have not a tittle to tell you. I lead so insipid a life, that, though I am content with it, it can furnish me with nothing but repetitions. I scarce ever stir from home in a morning; and most evenings go and play at loto with the French at Richmond, where I am heartily tired of hearing of nothing but their absurd countrymen,—absurd, both democrates and aristocrates. Calonne sends them gross lies, that raise their hopes to the skies: and in two days they hear of nothing but horrors and disappointments; and then, poor souls! they are in despair. I can say nothing to comfort them, but what I firmly believe, which is, that total anarchy must come on rapidly. Nobody pays the taxes that are laid; and which, intended to produce eighty millions a month, do not bring in six. The new Assembly will fall on the old,¹ probably plunder the richest, and certainly disapprove of much they have done; for can eight hundred new ignorants approve of what has been done by twelve hundred almost as ignorant, and who were far from half agreeing? And then their immortal constitution (which, besides, is to be mightily mended nine years hence) will die before it has cut any of its teeth but its grinders. The

¹ The Constitutional Assembly closed its sittings on the 30th of September; having, during the three years of its existence, enacted thirteen hundred laws and decrees, relative to legislation, or to the general administration of the state. The first sitting of the Legislative Assembly took place on the following day.—E.

exiles are enraged at their poor King for saving his own life by a forced acceptance:¹ and yet I know no obligation he has to his noblesse, who all ran away to save their own lives; not a gentleman, but the two poor gendarmes at Versailles, having lost their lives in his defence. I suppose La Fayette, Barnave,² the Lameths, &c. will run away, too,³ when the new tinkers and cobblers, of whom the present elect are and will be composed, proceed on the levelling system taught them by their predecessors, who, like other levellers, have taken good care of themselves. Good Dr. Priestley's friend, good Monsieur Condorcet, has got a place in the treasury of one thousand pounds a year:—*ex uno disce omnes!* And thus a set of rascals, who might, with temper and discretion, have obtained a very wholesome constitution, witness Poland! have committed infinite mischief, infinite cruelty, infinite injustice, and left a shocking precedent against liberty, unless the Poles are as much admired and imitated as the French ought to be detested.

I do not believe the Emperor will stir yet; he, or his ministers, must see that it is the interest of Germany to let France destroy itself. His interference yet might unite and consolidate, at least check further confusion: and though I rather think that twenty thousand men might march from one end of France to the other, as, though the officers often rallied, French soldiers never were stout; yet, having no officers, no discipline, no subordination, little resistance might be expected. Yet the enthusiasm that has been spread might turn into courage. Still it were better for Cæsar to wait. Quarrels amongst themselves will dissipate enthusiasm; and, if they have no foreign enemy, they will soon have spirit enough to turn their swords against one another, and what

¹ The King, on the 14th of September, had accepted the new constitution, and sworn to maintain it.—E.

² For expressing his opinion, that the new constitution inclined too much to a democracy, Barnave, after fifteen months' imprisonment at Grenoble, was tried before the revolutionary tribunal, condemned to death, and guillotined on the 29th of November 1793.—E.

³ The two Lameths, Charles and Alexander, fled the country. The latter, having fallen into the hands of the Austrians with La Fayette, shared his captivity, till December 1795.—E.

enthusiasm remains will soon be converted into the inveteracy of faction. This is speculation, not prophecy; I do not pretend to guess what will happen: I do think I know what will not; I mean, the system of experiments that they call a constitution cannot last. Marvellous indeed would it be, if a set of military noble lads, pedantic academicians, curates of villages, and country advocates, could in two years, amidst the utmost confusion and altercation amongst themselves, dictated to or thwarted by obstinate clubs of various factions, have achieved what the wisdom of all ages and all nations has never been able to compose—a system of government that would set four-and-twenty millions of people free, and contain them within any bounds! This, too, without one great man amongst them. If they had had, as Mirabeau seemed to promise to be, but as we know that he was, too, a consummate villain, there would soon have been an end of their vision of liberty. And so there will be still, unless, after a civil war, they split into small kingdoms or commonwealths. A little nation may be free; for it can be upon its guard. Millions cannot be so; because, the greater number of men that are one people, the more vices, the more abuses there are, that will either require or furnish pretexts for restraints; and if vices are the mother of laws, the execution of laws is the father of power:—and of such parents one knows the progeny.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Sept. 29, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE been very sorry, but not at all angry, at not hearing from you so long. With all your friendly and benevolent heart, I know by experience how little you love writing to your friends; and I know why: you think you lose moments which you could employ in doing more substantial good; and that your letters only pamper our minds, but do not feed or clothe our bodies: if they did, you would coin as much paper

as the French do in assignats. Do not imagine now that you have committed a wicked thing by writing to me at last: comfort yourself, that your conscience, not temptation, forced you to write; and be assured, I am as grateful as if you had written from choice, not from duty, your constant spiritual director.

I have been out of order the whole summer, but not very ill for above a fortnight. I caught a painful rheumatism by going into a very crowded church on a rainy day, where all the windows were open, to hear our friend the Bishop of London preach a charity sermon here at Twickenham. My gout would not resign to a new incumbent, but came too; and both together have so lamed my right arm, though I am now using it, that I cannot yet extend it entirely, nor lift it to the top of my head. However, I am free from pain; and as Providence, though it supplied us originally with so many bounties, took care we might shift with succedaneums on the loss of several of them, I am content with what remains of my stock; and since all my fingers are not useless, and that I have not six hairs left, I am not much grieved at not being able to comb my head. Nay, should not such a shadow as I have ever been, be thankful, that at the eve of seventy-five I am not yet passed away?

I am so little out of charity with the Bishop for having been the innocent cause of the death of my shoulder, that I am heartily concerned for him and her on Mrs. Porteus's accident.¹ It may have marbled her complexion, but I am persuaded has not altered her lively, amiable, good-humoured countenance. As I know not where to direct to them, and as you cannot suppose it a sin for a sheep to write to its pastor on a week-day, I wish you would mark the interest I take in their accident and escape from worse mischief.

I thank you most cordially for your inquiry after *my* wives. I am in the utmost perplexity of mind about them; torn between hopes and fears. I believe them set out from Florence on their return since yesterday se'ennight, and consequently

¹ An overturn in a carriage.

feel all the joy and impatience of expecting them in five or six weeks: but then, besides fears of roads, bad inns, accidents, heats and colds, and the sea to cross in November at last, all my satisfaction is dashed by the uncertainty whether they come through Germany or France. I have advised, begged, implored, that it may not be through those Iroquois, Lestryons, Anthropophagi, the Franks; and then, hearing passports were abolished, and the roads more secure, I half consented, as they wished it, and the road is much shorter; and then I repented, and have contradicted myself again. And now I know not which route they will take; nor shall enjoy any comfort from the thoughts of their return, till they are returned safe.

'Tis well I am doubly guaranteed, or who knows, as I am as old almost as both her husbands together, but Mrs. B—— might have cast a longing eye towards me? How I laughed at hearing of her throwing a second muckender to a Methusalem! a fat, red-faced veteran, with a portly hillock of flesh. I conclude all her grandfathers are dead; or, as there is no prohibition in the table of consanguinity against male ancestors, she would certainly have stepped back towards the Deluge, and ransacked her pedigrees on both sides for some kinsman of the patriarchs. I could titter *à plusieurs reprises*; but I am too old to be improper, and you are too modest to be *impropered* to: and so I will drop the subject at the herald's office.

I am happy at and honour Miss Burney's resolution in casting away golden, or rather gilt chains: others, out of vanity, would have worn them till they had eaten into the bone. On that charming young woman's chapter I agree with you perfectly; not a jot on *Deborah* * * * * *, whom you admire: I have neither read her verses, nor will. As I have not your aspen conscience, I cannot forgive the heart of a woman that is party per pale blood and tenderness, that curses our clergy and feels for negroes. Can I forget the 14th of July, when they all contributed their faggot to the fires that her presbytyrants (as Lord Melcombe called them) tried to light in every Smithfield in the island; and which, as Price and Priestley applauded in France, it would be folly to suppose

they did not only wish, but meant to kindle here? Were they ignorant of the atrocious barbarities, injustice, and violation of oaths committed in France? Did Priestley not know that the clergy there had no option but between starving and perjury? And what does he think of the poor man executed at Birmingham, who declared at his death, he had been provoked by the infamous hand-bill? I know not who wrote it. No, my good friend: *Deborah* may cant rhymes of compassion, but she is a hypocrite; and you shall not make me read her, nor, with all your sympathy and candour, can you esteem her. *Your* compassion for the poor blacks is genuine, sincere from your soul, most amiable; hers, a measure of faction. Her party supported the abolition, and regretted the disappointment as a blow to the good cause. I know this. Do not let your piety lead you into the weakness of respecting the bad, only because they hoist the flag of religion, while they carry a stiletto in the flag-staff. Did not they, previous to the 14th of July, endeavour to corrupt the guards? What would have ensued, had they succeeded, you must tremble to think!

You tell me nothing of your own health. May I flatter myself it is good? I wish I knew so authentically! and I wish I could guess when I should see you, without your being staked to the fogs of the Thames at Christmas; I cannot desire that. Adieu, my very valuable friend! I am, though unworthy, yours most cordially.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1791.

It will be a year to-morrow since you set out: next morning came the storm that gave me such a panic for you! In March happened your fall, and the wound on your nose; and in July your fever. For sweet Agnes I have happily had no separate alarm: yet I have still a month of apprehension to come for both! All this mass of vexation and fears is to be compensated by the transport at your return, and by the complete satisfaction on your installation at Cliveden. But

could I believe, that when my clock had struck seventy-four, I could pass a year in such agitation! It may be taken for dotage; and I have for some time expected to be superannuated: but, though I task myself severely, I do not find my intellects impaired; though I may be a bad judge myself. You may, perhaps, perceive it by my letters; and don't imagine I am laying a snare for flattery. No! I am only jealous about myself, that you two may have created such an attachment, without owing it to my weakness. Nay, I have some colt's limbs left, which I as little suspected as my anxieties.

I went with General Conway, on Wednesday morning, from Park-place to visit one of my ante-diluvian passions,—not a Statira or Roxana, but one pre-existent to myself,—one Windsor Castle; and I was so delighted and so juvenile, that, without attending to anything but my eyes, I stood full two hours and a half, and found that half my lameness consists in my indolence. Two Berrys, a Gothic chapel, and an historic castle, are anodynes to a torpid mind. I now fancy that old age was invented by the lazy. St. George's Chapel, that I always worshipped, though so dark and black that I could see nothing distinctly, is now, being cleaned and decorated, a scene of lightness and graces. Mr. Conway was so struck with its Gothic beauties and taste, that he owned the Grecian style would not admit half the variety of its imagination. There is a new screen prefixed to the choir, so airy and harmonious, that I concluded it Wyat's; but it is by a Windsor architect, whose name I forget. Jarvis's window, over the altar, after West, is rather too sombre for the Resurrection, though it accords with the tone of the choirs; but the Christ is a poor figure, scrambling to heaven in a fright, as if in dread of being again buried alive, and not ascending calmly in secure dignity: and there is a Judas below, so gigantic, that he seems more likely to burst by his bulk, than through guilt. In the midst of all this solemnity, in a small angle over the lower stalls, is crammed a small bas-relief, in oak, with the story of Margaret Nicholson, the King, and the Coachman, as ridiculously added and as clumsily executed as if it were a monkish miracle. Some loyal zealot has broken away the blade of

the knife, as if the sacred wooden personage would have been in danger still. The Castle itself is smugged up, is better glazed, has got some new stools, clocks, and looking-glasses, much embroidery in silk, and a gaudy, clumsy throne, with a medallion at top of the King's and Queen's heads, over their own—an odd kind of tautology, whenever they sit there ! There are several tawdry pictures, by West, of the history of the Garter; but the figures are too small for that majestic place. However, upon the whole, I was glad to see Windsor a little revived.

I had written thus far, waiting for a letter, and happily receive your two from Bologna together; for which I give you a million of thanks, and for the repairs of your coach, which I trust will contribute to your safety: but I will swallow my apprehensions, for I doubt I have tormented you with them. Yet do not wonder, that after a year's absence, my affection, instead of waning, is increased. Can I help feeling the infinite obligation I have to you both, for quitting Italy that you love, to humour Methusalem?—a Methusalem that is neither king nor priest, to reward and bless you; and whom you condescend to please, because he wishes to see you once more; though he ought to have sacrificed a momentary glimpse to your far more durable satisfaction. Instead of generosity, I have teased, and I fear, wearied you, with lamentations and disquiets; and how can I make you amends? What pleasure, what benefit, can I procure for you in return? The most disinterested generosity, such as yours is, gratifies noble minds; but how paltry am I to hope that the reflections of your own minds will compensate for all the amusements you give up to

Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death !

I may boast of having no foolish weakness for your persons, as I certainly have not; but

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lies in new *selfishness* through chinks that time has made.

And I have been as avaricious of hoarding a few moments of agreeable society, as if I had coveted a few more trumpery

guineas in my strong-box ! and then I have the assurance to tell you I am not superannuated ! Oh ! but I am !

The Bolognese school is my favourite, though I do not like Guercino, whom I call the German Guido, he is so heavy and dark. I do not, like your friend, venerate Constantinopolitan paintings, which are scarce preferable to Indian. The characters of the Italian comedy were certainly adopted even from the persons of its several districts and dialects. Pantaloon is a Venetian, even in his countenance ; and I once saw a gentleman of Bergamo, whose face was an exact Harlequin's mask.

I have scarce a pen-ful of news for you ; the world is at Weymouth or Newmarket. *En attendant, voici* the Gunnings again ! The old gouty General has carried off his tailor's wife ; or rather, she him—whither, I know not. Probably, not far ; for the next day the General was arrested for three thousand pounds, and carried to a spunging-house, whence he sent Cupid with a link to a friend, to beg help and a crutch. This amazing folly is generally believed ; perhaps because the folly of that race is amazing—so is their whole story. The two beautiful sisters were going on the stage, when they are at once exalted almost as high as they could be, were countessed and double-duchessed ; and now the rest of the family have dragged themselves through all the kennels of the newspapers ! Adieu ! forgive all my pouts. I will be perfectly good-humoured when I have nothing to vex me !

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.¹

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1791.

As I am sure of the sincerity of your congratulations,² I feel much obliged by them, though what has happened destroys my tranquillity ; and, if what the world reckons

¹ Now first collected.

² Mr. Walpole had succeeded to the title of Earl of Orford on the 5th of December, upon the death of his nephew George, the third Earl.—E.

advantages could compensate the loss of peace and ease, would ill indemnify me, even by them. A small estate, loaded with debt, and of which I do not understand the management, and am too old to learn; a source of law-suits amongst my near relations, though not affecting me; endless conversations with lawyers, and packets of letters to read every day and answer,—all this weight of new business is too much for the rag of life that yet hangs about me, and was preceded by three weeks of anxiety about my unfortunate nephew, and a daily correspondence with physicians and mad-doctors, falling upon me when I had been out of order ever since July. Such a mass of troubles made me very seriously ill for some days, and has left me and still keeps me so weak and dispirited, that, if I shall not soon be able to get some repose, my poor head or body will not be able to resist. For the empty title, I trust you do not suppose it is anything but an incumbrance, by larding my busy mornings with idle visits of interruption, and which, when I am able to go out, I shall be forced to return. Surely no man of seventy-four, unless superannuated, can have the smallest pleasure in sitting at home in his own room, as I almost always do, and being called by a new name !

It will seem personal, and ungrateful too, to have said so much about my own *triste* situation, and not to have yet thanked you, Sir, for your kind and flattering offer of letting me read what you have finished of your history; but it was necessary to expose my position to you, before I could venture to accept your proposal, when I am so utterly incapable of giving a quarter of an hour at a time to what I know, by my acquaintance with your works, will demand all my attention, if I wish to reap the pleasure they are formed to give me. It is most true that for these seven weeks I have not read seven pages, but letters, states of account, cases to be laid before lawyers, accounts of farms, &c. &c., and those subject to mortgages. Thus are my mornings occupied: in an evening my relations and a very few friends come to me; and, when they are gone, I have about an hour to midnight to write answers to letters for the next day's post, which I

had not time to do in the morning. This is actually my case now. I happened to be quitted at ten o'clock, and would not lose the opportunity of thanking you, not knowing when I could command another hour.

I by no means would be understood to decline your obliging offer, Sir: on the contrary, I accept it joyfully, if you can trust me with your manuscript for a little time, should I have leisure to read it but by small snatches, which would be wronging you, and would break all connexion in my head. Criticism you are too great a writer to want; and to read critically is far beyond my present power. Can a scrivener, or a scrivener's hearer, be a judge of composition, style, profound reasoning, and new lights and discoveries, &c.? But my weary hand and breast must finish. May I ask the favour of your calling on me any morning, when you shall happen to come to town? You will find the new-old lord exactly the same admirer of yours.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 1, 1792.

MY MUCH-ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I HAVE not so long delayed answering your letter from the pitiful revenge of recollecting how long your pen is fetching breath before it replies to mine. Oh! no; you know I love to *heap coals of kindness* on your head, and to draw you into little sins, that you may forgive yourself, by knowing your time was employed on big virtues. On the contrary, you would be revenged; for here have you, according to *your* notions, inveigled me into the fracture of a commandment; for I am writing to you on a Sunday, being the first moment of leisure that I have had since I received your letter. It does not indeed clash with my religious ideas, as I hold paying one's debts as good a deed, as praying and reading sermons for a whole day in every week, when it is impossible to fix the attention to one course of thinking for so many hours for fifty-two days in every year. Thus you see I can

preach too. But seriously, and indeed I am little disposed to cheerfulness now, I am overwhelmed with troubles, and with business — and business that I do not understand; law, and the management of a ruined estate, are subjects ill-suited to a head that never studied anything that in worldly language is called useful. The tranquillity of my remnant of life will be lost, or so perpetually interrupted, that I expect little comfort; not that I am already intending to grow rich, but, the moment one is supposed so, there are so many alert to turn one to their own account, that I have more letters to write to satisfy, or rather to dissatisfy them, than about my own affairs, though the latter are all confusion. I have such missives, on agriculture, pretensions to livings, offers of taking care of my game as I am incapable of it, self-recommendations of making my robes, and round hints of taking out my writ, that at least I may name a proxy, and give my dormant conscience to somebody or other! I trust you think better of my heart and understanding than to suppose that I have listened to any one of these new *friends*. Yet, though I have negatived all, I have been forced to answer some of them before you; and that will convince you how cruelly ill I have passed my time lately, besides having been made ill with vexation and fatigue. But I am tolerably well again.

For the other empty metamorphosis that has happened to the outward man, you do me justice in concluding that it can do nothing but tease me; it is being called names in one's old age. I had rather be my lord mayor, for then I should keep the nickname but a year; and mine I may retain a little longer, not that at seventy-five I reckon on becoming my Lord Methusalem. Vainer, however, I believe I am already become; for I have wasted almost two pages about myself, and said not a tittle about your health, which I most cordially rejoice to hear you are recovering, and as fervently hope you will entirely recover. I have the highest opinion of the element of water as a constant beverage; having so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of Providence, that I am persuaded that when it indulged us in such a luxu-

rious variety of eatables, and gave us but one drinkable, it intended that our sole liquid should be both wholesome and corrective. Your system I know is different; you hold that mutton and water were the only cock and hen that were designed for our nourishment; but I am apt to doubt whether draughts of water for six weeks are capable of restoring health, though some are strongly impregnated with mineral and other particles. Yet you have staggered me: the Bath water by your account is, like electricity, compounded of contradictory qualities; the one attracts and repels; the other turns a shilling yellow, and whitens your jaundice. I shall hope to see you (when is that to be?) without alloy.

I must finish, wishing you three hundred and thirteen days of happiness for the new year that is arrived this morning: the fifty-two that you hold in commendam, I have no doubt will be rewarded as such good intentions deserve. Adieu, my *too* good friend! My direction shall talk superciliously to the postman;¹ but do let me continue unchangeably your faithful and sincere,

HORACE WALPOLE.²

TO THOMAS BARRETT, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, May 14, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH my poor fingers do not yet write easily, I cannot help inquiring if Mabeuse³ is arrived safely at Lee, and fits his destined stall in the library. My amendment is far slower, *comme de raison*, than ever; and my weakness much greater. Another fit, I doubt, will confine me to my chair, if it does not do more; it is not worth haggling about that.

Dr. Darwin has appeared, superior in some respects to the former part. The Triumph of Flora, beginning at the fifty-ninth line, is most beautifully and enchantingly imagined;

¹ He means franking his letter by his newly-acquired title of Earl of Orford.

² This is the last letter signed Horace Walpole.—E.

³ A capital picture by that master, then lately purchased by Mr. Barrett.—E.

and the twelve verses that by miracle describe and comprehend the creation of the universe out of chaos, are in my opinion the most sublime passage in any author, or in any of the few languages with which I am acquainted. There are a thousand other verses most charming, or indeed all are so, crowded with most poetic imagery, gorgeous epithets and style: and yet these four cantos do not please me equally with the Loves of the Plants. This seems to me almost as much a rhapsody of unconnected parts; and is so deep, that I cannot read six lines together and know what they are about, till I have studied them in the long notes, and then perhaps do not comprehend them; but all this is my fault, not Dr. Darwin's. Is he to blame, that I am no natural philosopher, no chemist, no metaphysician? One misfortune will attend this glorious work; it will be little read but by those who have no taste for poetry, and who will be weighing and criticising his positions, without feeling the imagination, harmony, and expression of the versification. Is not it extraordinary, dear Sir, that two of our very best poets, Garth and Darwin, should have been physicians? I believe they have left all the lawyers wrangling at the turnpike of Parnassus. Adieu, dear Sir! Yours most cordially.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.¹

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 21, 1792.

MY DEAR SAINT HANNAH,

I HAVE frequently been going to write to you, but checked myself. You are so good and so bad, that I feared I should interrupt some act of benevolence on one side; and on the other, that you would not answer my letter in three months. I am glad to find, as an Irishman would say, that the way to make you answer is not to speak first. But, ah! I am a brute to upbraid any moment of your silence, though I regretted it when I hear that your kind intentions have been prevented

¹ Now first collected.

by frequent cruel pain! and that even your rigid abstemiousness does not remove your complaints. Your heart is always aching for others, and your head for yourself. Yet the latter never hinders the activity of the former. What must your tenderness not feel now, when a whole nation of monsters is burst forth? The *second* massacre of Paris has exhibited horrors that even surpass the former.¹ Even the Queen's women were butchered in the Thuilleries, and the tigers chopped off the heads from the dead bodies, and tossed them into the flames of the palace. The tortures of the poor King and Queen, from the length of their duration, surpass all example; and the brutal insolence with which they were treated on the 10th, all invention. They were dragged through the Place Vendome to see the statue of Louis the Fourteenth in fragments, and told it was to be the King's fate; and he, the most harmless of men, was told he is a monster; and this after three years of sufferings. King, and Queen, and children were shut up in a room, without nourishment, for twelve hours. One who was a witness has come over, and says he found the Queen sitting on the floor, trembling like an aspen in every limb, and her sweet boy the Dauphin asleep against her knee! She has not one woman to attend her that she ever saw, but a companion of her misery, the King's sister, an heroic virgin saint, who, on the former irruption into the palace, flew to and clung to her brother, and being mistaken for the Queen, and the hellish fiends wishing to murder her, and somebody aiming to undeceive them, she said, "Ah! ne les détrompez pas!"²

¹ From the 2nd to the 6th of September, these infernal atrocities proceeded uninterrupted, protracted by the actors, for the sake of the daily pay of a louis to each. M. Thiers states, that Billaud Varennes appeared publicly among the assassins, and encouraged what were called *the labourers*. "My friends," said he, "by taking the lives of villains you have saved the country. France owes you eternal gratitude, and the municipality offers you twenty livres a-piece, and you shall be paid immediately." All the reports of the time differ in their estimate of the number of the victims. "That estimate," says M. Thiers, "varies from six to twelve thousand in the prisons of France." Vol. ii. p. 45.—E.

² This fact is confirmed by M. Thiers. "During the irruption of the populace into the Thuilleries, on the 20th of June, Madame Elizabeth,"

Was not that sentence the sublime of innocence? But why do I wound your thrilling nerves with the relation of such horrible scenes? Your *blackmanity*¹ must allow some of its tears to these poor victims. For my part, I have an abhorrence of politics, if one can so term these tragedies, which make one harbour sentiments one naturally abhors; but can one refrain without difficulty from exclaiming such wretches should be exterminated? They have butchered hecatombs of Swiss, even to *porters* in private houses, because they often are, and always are called, *Le Suisse*. Think on fifteen hundred persons, probably more, butchered on the 10th,² in the space of eight hours. Think on premiums voted for the assassination of several princes, and do not think that such execrable proceedings have been confined to Paris; no, Avignon, Marseilles, &c. are still smoking with blood! Scarce the Alecto of the North, the legislatress and the usurper of Poland, has occasioned the spilling of larger torrents!

I am almost sorry that your letter arrived at this crisis; I cannot help venting a little of what haunts me. But it is better to thank Providence for the tranquillity and happiness we enjoy in this country, in spite of the philosophizing serpents we have in our bosom, the Paines, the Tookes, and the Woolstoncrofts. I am glad you have not read the tract of the last-mentioned writer. I would not look at it, though assured it contains neither metaphysics nor politics; but as she entered the lists on the latter, and borrowed her title from the demon's book, which aimed at spreading the *wrongs* of men, she is excommunicated from the pale of my library. We have

he says, "followed the King from window to window, to share his danger. The people, when they saw her, took her for the Queen. Shouts of 'There's the Austrian!' were raised in an alarming manner. The national grenadiers, who had surrounded the Princess, endeavoured to set the people right. 'Leave them,' said that generous sister, 'leave them in their error, and save the Queen!'" Vol. i. p. 306.—E.

¹ An allusion to the lively interest Miss More was taking in the abolition of the slave trade.—E.

² At the storming of the Thuilleries. "The Marseillais," says M. Thiers, "made themselves masters of the palace: the rabble, with pikes, poured in after them, and the rest of the scene was soon but one general massacre; the unfortunate Swiss in vain begged for quarter, at the same time throwing down their arms; they were butchered without mercy." Vol. i. p. 380.—E.

had enough of new systems, and the world a great deal too much, already.

Let us descend to private life. Your friend Mrs. Boscawen, I fear, is unhappy: she has lost most suddenly her son-in-law, Admiral Leveson. Mrs. Garrick I have scarcely seen this whole summer. She is a liberal Pomona to me—I will not say an Eve; for though she reaches fruit to me, she will never let me in, as if I were a boy, and would rob her orchard.

As you interest yourself about a certain trumpery old person, I with infinite gratitude will add a line on him. He is very tolerably well, weak enough certainly, yet willing to be contented; he is satisfied with knowing that he is at his best. Nobody grows stronger at seventy-five, nor recovers the use of limbs half lost; nor—though neither deaf nor blind, nor in the latter most material point at all impaired; nor, as far as he can find on strictly watching himself, much damaged as to common uses in his intellects—does the gentleman expect to avoid additional decays, if his life shall be further protracted. He has been too fortunate not to be most thankful for the past, and most submissive for what is to come, be it more or less. He forgot to say, that the warmth of his heart towards those he loves and esteems has not suffered the least diminution, and consequently he is as fervently as ever Saint Hannah's most sincere friend and humble servant,

ORFORD.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, August 31, 1792.

YOUR long letter and my short one crossed one another upon the road. I knew I was in your debt; but I had nothing to say but what you know better than I; for you read all the French papers, and I read none, as they have long put me out of all patience: and besides, I hear so much of their horrific proceedings, that they quite disturb me, and have given me what I call the French disease; that is, a barbarity that I abhor, for I cannot help wishing destruction to thousands of human creatures whom I never saw.

But when men have worked themselves up into tigers and hyænas, and labour to communicate their appetite for blood, what signifies whether they walk on two legs or four, or whether they dwell in cities, or in forests and dens? Nay, the latter are the more harmless wild beasts; for they only cranch a poor traveller now and then, and when they are famished with hunger: the others, though they have dined, cut the throats of some hundreds of poor Swiss for an afternoon's luncheon. Oh! the execrable nation!

I cannot tell you any new particulars, for Mesdames de Cambis and d'Hennin, my chief informers, are gone to Goodwood to the poor Duchesse de Biron, of whose recovery I am impatient to hear; and so I am of the cause of her very precipitate flight and panic. She must, I think, have had strong motives; for two years ago I feared she was much too courageous, and displayed her intrepidity too publicly. If I did not always condemn the calling *bad* people *mad* people, I should say all Paris is gone distracted: they furnish provocation to every species of retaliation, by publishing rewards for assassination of kings and generals, and cannot rest without incensing all Europe against them.

The Duchess of York gave a great entertainment at Oatlands on her Duke's birthday; sent to his tradesmen in town to come to it, and allowed two guineas a-piece to each for their carriage; gave them a dance, and opened the ball herself with the Prince of Wales. A company of strollers came to Weybridge to act in a barn: she was solicited to go to it, and did out of charity, and carried all her servants. Next day a Methodist teacher came to preach a charity sermon in the same theatre, and she consented to hear it on the same motive; but her servants desired to be excused, on not understanding English. "Oh!" said the Duchess, "but you went to the comedy, which you understood less, and you shall go to the sermon;" to which she gave handsomely, and for them. I like this.

Tack this to my other fragment, and then, I trust, I shall not be a defaulter in correspondence. I own I am become an indolent poor creature: but is that strange? With

seventy-five years over my head, or on the point of being so; with a chalk-stone in every finger; with feet so limping, that I have been but twice this whole summer round my own small garden; and so much weaker than I was, can I be very comfortable, but when sitting quiet and doing nothing? All my strength consists in my sleep, which is as vigorous as at twenty: but with regard to letter-writing, I have so many to write on business which I do not understand, since the unfortunate death of my nephew, that, though I make them as brief as possible, half-a-dozen short ones tire me as much as a long one to an old friend; and as the busy ones must be executed, I trespass on the others, and remit them to another day. Norfolk has come very mal-à-propos into the end of my life, and certainly never entered into my views and plans; and I, who could never learn the multiplication table, was not intended to transact leases, direct repairs of farm-houses, settle fines for church lands, negotiate for lowering interest on mortgages, &c. In short, as I was told formerly, though I know several things, I never understood anything useful. Apropos, the letter of which Lady Cecilia Johnstone told you is not at all worth your seeing. It was an angry one to a parson who oppresses my tenants, and will go to law with them about tythes. She came in as I was writing it; and as I took up the character of parson myself, and preached to him as pastor of a flock which it did not become him to lead into the paths of law, instead of those of peace, I thought it would divert, and showed it to her. Adieu! I have been writing to you till midnight, and my poor fingers ache. Yours ever.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 9, 1793.

MY HOLY HANNAH,

WITH your innate and usual goodness and sense, you have done me justice by guessing exactly at the cause of my long silence. You have been apt to tell me that my letters

diverted you. How then could I write, when it was impossible but to attrist you! when I could speak of nothing but unparalleled horrors! and but awaken your sensibility, if it slumbered for a moment! What mind could forget the 10th of August and the 2d of September; and that the black and bloody year 1792 has plunged its murderous dagger still deeper, and already made 1793 still more detestably memorable! though its victim¹ has at last been rewarded for four years of torture by forcing from him every kind of proof of the most perfect character that ever sat on a throne. Were these, alas! themes for letters? Nay, am I not sure that *you* have been still more shocked by a crime that passes even the guilt of shedding the blood of poor Louis, to hear of atheism avowed, and the avowal tolerated by monsters calling themselves a National Assembly! But I have no words that can reach the criminality of such *inferno-human* beings, but must compose a term that aims at conveying my idea of them. For the future it will be sufficient to call them *the French*; I hope no other nation will ever deserve to be confounded with them!

Indeed, my dear friend, I have another reason for wishing

¹ On the 21st of January, Louis the Sixteenth had been beheaded in the Place Louis Quinze, erected to the memory of his grandfather. M. Thiers thus concludes his account of this horrible event:—"At ten minutes past ten, the carriage stopped. Louis, rising briskly, stepped out into the Place. Three executioners came up; he refused their assistance, and stripped off his clothes himself; but, perceiving that they were going to bind his hands, he betrayed a movement of indignation, and seemed ready to resist. M. Edgeworth, whose every expression was then sublime, gave him a last look, and said, 'Suffer this outrage, as a last resemblance to that God who is about to be your reward.' At these words the victim, resigned and submissive, suffered himself to be bound and conducted to the scaffold. All at once, Louis took a hasty step, separated himself from the executioners, and advanced to address the people. 'Frenchmen,' said he, in a firm voice, 'I die innocent of the crimes which are imputed to me; I forgive the authors of my death, and I pray that my blood may not fall upon France.' He would have continued, but the drums were instantly ordered to beat: their rolling drowned the voice of the Prince; the executioners laid hold of him, and M. Edgeworth took his leave in these memorable words, 'Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven!' As soon as the blood flowed, furious wretches dipped their pikes and their handkerchiefs in it, spread themselves throughout Paris, shouting *Vive la République! vive la nation!* and even went to the gates of the Temple to display their brutal and factious joy." Vol. ii. p. 228. —E.

to burn my pen entirely: all my ideas are confounded and overturned; I do not know whether all I ever learned in the seventy first years of my seventy-five was not wrong and false: common sense, reasoning, calculation, conjecture from analogy and from history of past events, all, all have been baffled; nor am I sure that what used to be thought the result of experience and wisdom was not a mass of mistakes. Have I not found, do I not find, that the invention of establishing metals as the *signs* of property was an useless discovery, or at least only useful till the art of making paper was found out? Nay, the latter is preferable to gold and silver. If the ores were adulterated and cried down, nobody would take them in exchange. Depreciate paper as much as you will, and it will still serve all the purposes of barter. Tradesmen still keep shops, stock them with goods, and deliver their commodities for those coined rags. Poor Reason, where art thou?

To show you that memory and argument are of no value, at least with me, I thought a year or two that this paper-mint would soon blow up, because I remembered that when Mr. Charles Fox and one or two more youths of brilliant genius first came to light, and into vast debts at play, they imparted to the world an important secret which they had discovered. It was, that nobody needed to want money, if they would pay enough for it. Accordingly, they borrowed of Jews at vast usury: but as they had made but an incomplete calculation, the interest so soon exceeded the principal, that the system did not maintain its ground for above two or three years. Faro has proved a more substantial speculation. But I miscarried in applying my remembrance to the assignats, which still maintain their ground against that long-decried but as long-adored corrupter of virtue, gold.¹ Alack! I do

¹ “ The causes which at this time put assignats apparently on a par with specie were the following. A law forbade, under heavy penalties, the traffic in specie, that is, the exchange at a loss of the assignat against money: another law decreed very severe penalties against those who, in purchases, should bargain for different prices according as payment was to be made in paper or in cash: by a last law, it was enacted, that hidden gold, silver, or jewels, should belong partly to the state, partly to the

not hear that virtue has flourished more for the destruction of its old enemy !

Shall I add another truth ? I have been so disgusted and fatigued by hearing of nothing but French massacres, &c. and found it so impossible to shift conversation to any other topic, that before I had been a month in town, I wished Miss Gunning would revive, that people might have at least one other subject to interest the ears and tongues of the public. But no wonder universal attention is engrossed by the present portentous scene ! It seems to draw to a question, whether Europe or France is to be depopulated ; whether civilization can be recovered, or the republic of Chaos can be supported by assassination. We have heard of the golden, silver, and iron ages ; the brazen one existed, while the French were only predominantly insolent. What the present age will be denominated, I cannot guess. Though the paper age would be characteristic, it is not emphatic enough, nor specifies the enormous sins of the fiends that are the agents. I think it may be styled the diabolic age : the Duke of Orleans has dethroned Satan, who since his fall has never instigated such crimes as Orleans has perpetrated.¹

informer. Thenceforth people could neither employ specie in trade nor conceal it ; it became troublesome ; it exposed the holders to the risk of being considered as suspected persons ; they began to be afraid of it, and to find the assignat preferable for daily use." Thiers, vol. iii. p. 213.—E.

¹ Louis-Philippe-Joseph, Duke of Orleans, who had relinquished his titles and called himself Philippe Egalité, and become a member of the National Convention, in giving his vote for the death of his kinsman, had read these words :—" Exclusively governed by my duty, and convinced that all those who have resisted the sovereignty of the people deserve death, my vote is for death ! " The atrocity of this vote occasioned great agitation in the assembly ; it seemed as if, by this single vote, the fate of the Monarch was irrevocably sealed. On the 6th of November, in the same year, the Duke was himself brought before the revolutionary tribunal, and condemned on account of the suspicions which he had excited in all the parties. " Odious," says M. Thiers, " to the emigrants, suspected by the Girondins and the Jacobins, he inspired none of those regrets which afford some consolation for an unjust death. A universal disgust, an absolute scepticism, were his last sentiments ; and he went to the scaffold with extraordinary composure and indifference. As he was drawn along the Rue St. Honoré, he beheld his palace with a dry eye, and never belied for a moment his disgust of men and of life." Vol. iii. p. 205.—E.

Let me soften my tone a little, and harmonise your poor mind by sweeter accents. In this deluge of triumphant enormities, what traits of the sublime and beautiful may be gleaned! Did you hear of Madame Elizabeth, the King's sister? a saint like yourself. She doted on her brother, for she certainly knew his soul. In the tumult in July, hearing the populace and the poissardes had broken into the palace, she flew to the King, and by embracing him tried to shield his person. The populace took her for the Queen, cried out "*Voilà cette chienne, cette Autrichienne!*" and were proceeding to violence. Somebody, to save her, screamed "*Ce n'est pas la Reine, c'est —.*" The Princess said, "*Ah! mon Dieu! ne les détrompez pas.*" If that was not the most sublime instance of perfect innocence ready prepared for death, I know not where to find one. Sublime indeed, too, was the sentence of good father Edgeworth, the King's confessor, who, thinking his royal penitent a little dismayed just before the fatal stroke, cried out "*Montez, digne fils de St. Louis! Le ciel vous est ouvert.*" The holy martyr's countenance brightened up, and he submitted at once. Such victims, such confessors as those, and Monsieur de Malesherbes, repair some of the breaches in human nature made by Orleans, Condorcet, Santerre, and a legion of evil spirits.

The tide of horrors has hurried me much too far, before I have vented a note of my most sincere concern for your bad account of your health. I feel for it heartily, and wish your frame were as sound as your soul and understanding. What can I recommend? I am no physician but for my own flimsy texture; which by studying, and by contradicting all advice, I have drawn to this great age. Patience, temperance, nay, abstinence, are already yours; in short, you want to be corrected of nothing but too much piety, too much rigour towards yourself, and too much sensibility for others. Is not it possible to serve mankind, without feeling too great pity? Perhaps I am a little too much hardened, I am grown too little alarmed for the health of my friends, from being become far more indifferent to life; I look to the nearness of my end, as a delivery from specta-

cles of woe. We have even amongst us monsters, more criminal, in speculation at least, than the French. They had cause to wish for correction of a bad government; though, till *taught* to dislike it, three-fourths of the country, I maintain, adored theirs. We have the perfectest ever yet devised; but if to your numerous readings of little pamphlets you would add one more, called “Village Politics,”¹ infinitely superior to anything on the subject, clearer, better stated, and comprehending the whole mass of matter in the shortest compass, you will be more mistress of the subject than any man in England. I know who wrote it, but will not tell you, because you did not tell me.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, March 23, 1793.

I SHALL certainly not leave off taunting your virtues, my excellent friend, for I find it sometimes makes you correct them. I scolded you for your modesty in not acquainting me with your “Village Politics” even after they were published; and you have already conquered that unfriendly delicacy, and announced another piece of which you are in labour. Still I see there wanted your ghostly father, the Bishop of London, to enjoin you to be *quite* shameless and avow your natural child.² I do approve his doctrine: calling it by your own name will make its fortune. If, like Rousseau, you had left your babe among the *enfants trouvés*, it might never be heard of more than his poor issue have been; for I can but observe that the French patriots, who have made such a fuss with his ashes, have not taken the smallest

¹ A little work which Miss More had just published anonymously. The sale of it was enormous. Many thousands were sent by government to Scotland and Ireland. Several persons printed large editions of it at their own expense; and in London only many hundred thousands were circulated.—E.

² Miss More had informed Walpole, that she was occupied in writing her “Remarks” on the atheistical speech of M. Dupont, made in the National Convention; and to which the Bishop of London had recommended her to put her name.—E.

pains to attempt to discover his real progeny, which might not have been impossible by collating dates and circumstances. I am proud of having imitated you at a great distance, and been persuaded, much against my will and practice, to let my name be put to the second subscription for the poor French clergy, as it was thought it might tend to animate that consumptive contribution.

I am impatient for your pamphlet, not only as being yours, but hoping it will invigorate horror against French atheism, which I am grieved to say did not by any means make due impression. I did very early apply to *your confessor*, to beg he would enjoin his clergy to denounce that shocking impiety; I could almost recommend to you to add a slight postscript on the massacre of that wretch Manuel. I do not love such insects as we are dispensing *judgments*; yet, if the punishment of that just victim might startle such profane criminals, it might be charity to suggest the hint to them.

24th.

I must modify the massacre of Manuel: he has been a good deal stabbed, but will, they say, recover.¹ Perhaps it is better that some of those assassins should live to acknowledge, that “Do not to others what you would not have done to you” is not so silly a maxim as most of the precepts of morality and justice have lately been deemed by *philosophers and legislators*—titles self-assumed by men who have abolished all other titles; and who have disgraced and debased the former denomination, and under the latter have enjoined triple perjuries, and at last cannot fix on any code which should exact more forswearing. I own I am pleased that that ruffian pedant Condorcet’s new constitution was too clumsy and unwieldy to go down the throats of those who

¹ Manuel was deeply implicated in the massacres of 1792; in consequence of which he was nominated a deputy to the National Convention. He resigned his seat in January 1793, and retired to Montargis, where he narrowly escaped assassination. He was afterwards seized as a suspected person. On being brought before the revolutionary tribunal, he reminded his judges of his services, and desired it might be engraved on his tombstone, that he had occasioned the events of the 10th of August. He was guillotined in November 1793.—E.

have swallowed everything else. I did but just cast my eyes on the beginning and end, and was so lucky as to observe the hypocrite's contradiction: he sets out with declaration of equality, and winds up with security of property; that is, we will plunder everybody, and then entail the spoils on ourselves and our (*wrong*) heirs.¹

Well! that bloody chaos seems recoiling on themselves! It looks as if civil war was bursting out in many provinces, and will precipitate approaching famine. When, till *now*, could one make such a reflection without horror to one's self? But, alas! have not the French brought it to the question, whether Europe or France should be laid desolate? Religion, morality, justice, have been stabbed, torn up by the roots: every right has been trampled under foot. Marriage has been profaned and undermined by law; and no wonder, that, amidst such excesses, the poor arts have shared in the common ruin! And who have been the perpetrators of, or advocates for, such universal devastation? Philosophers, geometricians, astronomers—a Condorcet, a Bailly, a Bishop of Autun, and a Doctor Priestley, and the last the worst. The French had seen grievances, crying grievances! yet not under the good late King. But what calamities or dangers threatened or had fallen on Priestley, but want of papal power, like his predecessor Calvin? If you say his house was burnt—but did he intend the fire should blaze on that side of the street? *Your* charity may believe him innocent, but your understanding does not. Well! I am glad to hear he is going to America; I hope he will not bring back scalping, even to that National Assembly of which he was proud of being elected a member! I doubt if Cartouche would have thought it an honour. It was stuck up in

¹ In the following July, Condorcet was accused of being an accomplice with Brissot, and, to save his life, concealed himself in the house of Madame Verney, where he remained eight months. Having at length learned that death was denounced against all who harboured a proscribed individual, he fled in disguise from Paris. He wandered about for some time, until, driven by hunger, he entered a small public-house at Clamar, where he was arrested as a suspicious person, and thrown into prison. On the following morning, March 28, 1794, he was found dead on the floor of his room, having apparently swallowed poison, which he always carried about with him.—E.

Lloyd's coffee-house lately, that the Duke of Orleans was named "Chef de la République." I thought it should be "Chef de la Lie publique."

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—some parts made me smile: yet, if what you heard of your brother proves true, I rather think it deplorable! How can love of money, or the still vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but most insignificant office, which even poor Lord Salisbury could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his ease and his own way, to stoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been cast ignominiously? I believe I have more pride than most men alive: I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by some singular action of *éclat*; but for titles, ribands, offices of no business, which anybody can fill, and must be given to many, I should just as soon be proud of being the top 'squire in a country village.¹ It is only worse to have waded to distinction through dirt, like Lord Auckland.²

All this shifting of scenes may, as you say, be food to the *Fronde* — *Sed defendit numerus*. It is perfectly ridiculous to use any distinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs*. Many years ago I thought that the wisest appellations for contending factions ever assumed, were those in the Roman empire, who called themselves *the greens* and *the blues*: it was so easy, when they changed sides, to slide from one colour to the other; and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue*, but always a *greenish blue*; and *vice versâ*. I allow that the steadiest party-man may be staggered by novel and unforeseen circumstances. The outrageous pro-

¹ On the 29th of this month, the Earl of Hertford was created a Marquis. He died on the 14th of June, in the following year, at the age of seventy-five.—E.

² On the 23rd of May, William Eden, Lord Auckland, had been created an English peer.—E.

ceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cause of liberty, and will, I fear, have shaken it for centuries; for Condorcet and such fiends are worse than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland. But I do not see why detestation of anarchy and assassination must immediately make one fall in love with garters and seals.

I am sitting by the fire, as I have done ever since I came hither; and since I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wishing for rain, or I shall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a noseful of roses. Indeed, as I have seen several fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as usual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are suited to each other. Providence did not trouble itself about its being more expensive to us to make our hay over and over; it only took care it should not want water enough. Adieu!

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, late, July 17, 1793.

I AM just come from dining with the Bishop of London at Fulham, where I found Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, who told me of the alarm you had from hearing some screams that you thought Lady Ailesbury's, and the disorder brought upon you by flying to assist her. I do not at all wonder at your panic, and rejoice it was not founded, and that you recovered so soon. I am not going to preach against your acting so naturally: but as you have some complaint on your breast, I must hope you will remember this accident, and be upon your guard against both sudden and rapid exertions, when you have not a tantamount call. I conclude the excessive heat we have had for twelve complete days contributed to overpower you.

It is much cooler to-day, yet still delicious; for be it known to you that I have enjoyed weather worthy of Africa,¹ and

¹ Bishop Porteus, writing to Miss More on the 12th of August, says, "Your friend Lord Orford and myself are, I believe, the only persons in

yet without swallowing mouthfuls of muskitos, nor expecting to hear hyænas howl in the village, nor to find scorpions in my bed. Indeed, all the way I came home, I could but gaze at the felicity of my countrymen. The road was one string of stage-coaches loaded within and without with noisy jolly folks, and chaises and gigs that had been pleasuring in clouds of dust; every door and every window of every house was open, lights in every shop, every door with women sitting in the street, every inn crowded with jaded horses, and every ale-house full of drunken toppers; for you know the English always announce their sense of heat or cold by drinking. Well! it was impossible not to enjoy such a scene of happiness and affluence in every village, and amongst the lowest of the people; and who are told by villanous scribblers, that they are oppressed and miserable. New streets, new towns, are rising every day and everywhere; the earth is covered with gardens and crops of grain.

How bitter to turn from this Elysium to the Temple at Paris! The fiends there have now torn her son from the Queen!¹ Can one believe that they are human beings, who 'midst all their confusions sit coolly meditating new tortures, new anguish for that poor, helpless, miserable woman, after four years of unexampled sufferings? Oh! if such crimes are not made a dreadful lesson, this world might become a theatre of cannibals!

I hope the checks in Bretagne are legends coined by miscreants at Paris. What can one believe? Well, I will go to bed, and try to dream of peace and plenty; and though

the kingdom who are worthy of the hot weather—the only true genuine summer we have had for the last thirty years: we both agreed that it was perfectly celestial, and that it was quite scandalous to huff it away as some people did. A few days before it arrived, all the world was complaining of the dreadfully cold north-east wind; and in three days after the warmer weather came in everybody was quarrelling with the heat, and sinking under the rays of the sun. Such is that consistent and contented thing called human nature!"—E.

¹ Marie Antoinette was separated from her sister, her daughter, and her son, by virtue of a decree which ordered the trial. Weber, in his memoirs of her, states, that the separation from her son was so touching, so heart-rending, that the very gaolers who witnessed the scene confessed, when they were giving an account of it to the authorities, that they could not refrain from tears.—E.

my lawn is burnt, and my peas and beans, and roses and strawberries parched, I will bear it with patience till the harvest is got in. Saint Swithin can never hold his water for forty days, though he can do the contrary. Good-night !

TO THE MISS BERRYS.¹

Tuesday night, 8 o'clock, Sept. 17, 1793.

MY BELOVED SPOUSES,

WHOM I love better than Solomon loved his one spouse — or his one thousand. I lament that the summer is over; not because of its unicity, but because you two made it so delightful to me, that six weeks of gout could not sour it. Pray take care of yourselves — not for your own sakes, but for mine; for, as I have just had my quota of gout, I may, possibly, expect to see another summer; and, as you allow that I do know my own, and when I wish for anything and have it, am entirely satisfied, you may depend upon it that I shall be as happy with a third summer, if I reach it, as I have been with the two last.

Consider, that I have been threescore years and ten looking for a society that I perfectly like; and at last there dropped out of the clouds into Lady Herries's room two young gentlewomen, who I so little thought were sent thither on purpose for me, that when I was told they were the charming Miss Berrys, I would not even go to the side of the chamber where they sat. But, as Fortune never throws anything at one's head without hitting one, I soon found that the charming Berrys were precisely *ce qu'il me fallait*; and that though young enough to be my great-grand-daughters, lovely enough to turn the heads of all our youths, and sensible enough, if said youths have any brains, to set all their heads to rights again. Yes, sweet damsels, I have found that you can bear to pass half your time with an ante-diluvian, without discovering any *ennui* or disgust; though his greatest merit towards

¹ The Miss Berrys were at this time in Yorkshire.

you is, that he is not one of those old fools who fancy they are in love in their dotage. I have no such vagary ; though I am not sorry that some folks think I am so absurd, since it frets their selfishness. The Mackinsys, Onslows, Miss Pelham, and Madame de Cambis have dined here ; and to-morrow I shall have the Hamptonians and other Richmondists. I must repeat it ; keep in mind that both of you are delicate, and not strong. If you return in better health, I shall not repine at your journey. Good night !

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday, 3 o'clock, Sept. 25, 1793.

EVERYTHING has gone *au mieux*. The rain vented itself to the last drop yesterday ; and the sun, as bright as the Belvidere, has not had a wrinkle on his brow since eight o'clock this morning ; nay, he has been warm, and gilded the gallery and tribune with sterling rays ; the Thames quite full with the last deluges, and the verdure never fresher since it was born. The Duchess of York arrived punctually at twelve, in a high phaeton, with Mrs. Ewert, and Bude on horseback. On the step of the gate was a carpet, and the court matted. I received the Princess at the side of her chaise, and, when entered, kissed her hand. She had meant to ride ; but had hurt her foot, and was forced to sit most of the time she was here. We had many civil contests about my sitting too ; but I resisted, and held out till after she had seen the house and drank chocolate in the round drawing-room ; and then she commanded General Bude to sit, that I might have no excuse : yet I rose and fetched a salver, to give her the chocolate myself, and then a glass of water. She seemed much pleased, and commended much ; and I can do no less of her, and with the strictest truth. She is not near so small as I had expected ; her face is very agreeable and lively ; and she is so good-humoured, and so gracious, and so natural, that I do not believe Lady Mary Coke¹ would have made a quarter so

¹ Lady Mary Coke, youngest daughter of John Duke of Argyle, mar-

pleasing a Duchess of York ; nor have been in half so sweet a temper, unless by my attentions *de vieille cour*. I was sorry my Eagle¹ had been forced to hold its tongue. To-morrow I shall go to Oatlands, with my thanks for the honour ; and there, probably, will end my connexions with courts, begun with George the First, great-great-great-grandfather to the Duchess of York ! It sounds as if there could not have been above three generations more before Adam.

Great news ! How eager Mr. Berry will look !—but it is not from armies or navies ; not from the murderers at Paris, nor from the victims at Grodno. No ! it is only an event in the little world of me. This morning, to receive my Princess, I put on a silver waistcoat that I had made three years ago for Lord Cholmondeley's marriage, and have not worn since. Considering my late illness, and how many hundredweight of chalk I have been venting these ten years, I concluded my wedding garment would wrap round me like my night-gown ; but, lo ! it was grown too tight for me. I shall be less surprised, if, in my next century, and under George the Tenth, I grow as plump as Mrs. Ellis.

Methinks I pity you, when all the world is in arms, and you expect to hear that Saul Duke of Brunswick has slain his thousands, and David Prince of Cobourg his ten thousands, to be forced to read the platitudes that I send you, because I have nothing better to amuse me than writing to you. Well ! you know how to get rid of my letters. Good night. I reckon you are at Brumpton,² and have had no accidents, I hope, on the road.

ried to Lord Coke, eldest son of the Earl of Leicester. After his death she fancied an attachment existed between herself and the Duke of York, brother of George the Third ; which she likewise *fancied* had ended in an undeclared marriage.—M. B.

¹ The antique marble eagle in the gallery at Strawberry Hill, round the neck of which was to have been suspended some lines which Lord Orford had written, extolling the Duke of York's military fame and conquests in Holland, which the unfortunate issue of the campaign obliged him to suppress.—E.

² The seat of Sir George Cayley, Bart. near Scarborough.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1793.

You are welcome to Scarborough both, and *buon provi-faccia!* As you, Mrs. Mary, have been so mistaken about your sister, I shall allow nobody for the future to take a panic about either, but myself. I am rejoiced the journey seems hitherto to answer so well; but, do you know, "it is very inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer." I am forced to eat all the game of your purparties, as well as my own thirds.

Pray did not you think that the object of the grand alliance was to reduce France? No such thing! at least their views have changed ever since they heard of your setting out. Without refining too much, it is clear to me that all they think on now, is to prevent my sending you news. Does any army stir? Is not the Duke of Brunswick gone to sleep again, like a paroli at faro, or like a paroli at Torbay, which cocks one corner, but never wins a septleva? That Lord Admiral reminds me of a trait of poor Don Carlos, which helped on his death-warrant. He one day made a little book, which he intituled "The Travels of Philip the Second, King of Spain." It contained his Majesty's removals from his capital to his country palaces, and back again. Well! if all those monarchs are so pitiful as to set their wits against you, I will balk them. I will do as other folks do; I will make news myself—not to-night; for I have no invention by me at present: besides, you are apt to sift news too shrewdly.

But, before I coin a report for you, I must contradict one. If you should hear in Yorkshire, that I am appointed aide-de-camp to the Duke of York, you may safely contradict it. It could only arise from the Duchess of York's visit to me; just as, the year before you came to Cliveden, your predecessor, Sir Robert Goodere, literally told me, that he *heard* that Princess Elizabeth had been sent to me for two days for the air. On questioning him roundly, I discovered that he had *heard* no such thing; but had conjectured so, on seeing two of the Duchess of Gloucester's servants pass before his door

from or to the Pavilions; which ought not to have puzzled the goose's imagination a moment — but thus reports originate!

Monday night, 7th.

I come from Mrs. Jeffries at Richmond, but return not a battle richer than I went; though I saw the secretary-at-war¹ there, and even the panic-master-general, who had not a single alarm to bestow on a poor soul who is hungering and thirsting for news, good or bad, to send to you. Sir George Yonge, indeed, did tell us, that thirty Jacobins, who had disguised themselves as priests, to bring scandal on their countrymen of that profession, but who, the Bishop of Leon declares, are none of their clergy, have been detected and seized, and are to be sent away to-morrow. Home news from Richmond. Your friend Mr. Dundas was robbed this morning at eleven o'clock at Cranford-bridge. He happened to tell them he is a surgeon; on which they insisted on his giving them his case of instruments. I suspect they are French surgeons, and will poison the instruments for the first wound they dress. You see how I labour in your service, though my crops are small. An old Duchess of Rutland, mother of the late Duchess of Montrose, whenever a visiter told her some news or scandal, cried to her daughter, "Lucy, do step into next room, and make a memorandum of what Lady Greenwich, or Lady M.M. or N.N. has been telling us." "Lord! Madam, to be sure it cannot be true." "No matter, child; it will do for news into the country." It is for want of such prudent *provision pour le couvent*, that so many people are forced to invent off-hand. You cannot say I am so thoughtless: you receive every morsel piping-hot as it comes from the bakers. One word about our glorious weather, and I have done. It even improves every day. I kept the window wide open till dinner-time to-day, and could do nothing but gaze at the brilliant beauty of the verdure. It is so equal to ordinary Julys, that one is surprised to see the sun set before six o'clock. Good-night!

¹ Sir George Yonge.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.¹

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 1793.

THOUGH it would make me happy, my dear Madam, if you were more corresponding, yet I must not reproach your silence, nor wish it were less; for all your moments are so dedicated to goodness, and to unwearied acts of benevolence, that you must steal from charity, or purloin from the repose you want, any that you bestow on me. Do not I know, too, alas! how indifferent your health is? You sacrifice that to your duties: but can a friend, who esteems you so highly as I do, be so selfish as to desire to cost you half an hour's headache? No, never send me a line that you can employ better; that would trespass on your ease.

Of the trash written against you I had never even heard.² Nor do I believe that they gave you any other disquiet than what arose from seeing that the worthiest and most *humane* intentions are poison to some human beings. Oh! have not the last five years brought to light such infernal malevolence, such monstrous crimes, as mankind had grown civilized enough to disbelieve when they read anything similar in former ages; if, indeed, anything similar has been recorded. But I must not enter into what I dare not fathom. Catherine Slay-Czar triumphs over the good honest Poles; and Louis Seize perishes on a scaffold, the best of men: while whole assemblies of fiends, calling themselves *men*, are from day to day meditating torment and torture for his heroic widow; on whom, with all their power and malice, and with every page, footman, and chambermaid of hers in their reach, and with the rack in their hands, they have not been able to fix a speck. Nay, do they not talk of the inutility of evidence? What other virtue ever sustained such an ordeal? But who can wonder, when the Almighty himself is called by one of those wretches, the *soi-disant* God.

¹ Now first collected.

² Three abusive answers to Miss More's pamphlet against M. Dupont had just been published.—E.

You say their outrageous folly tempts you to smile¹ — yes, yes: at times I should have laughed too, if I could have dragged my muscles at once from the zenith of horror to the nadir of contempt: but their abominations leave one leisure enough to leap from indignation to mirth. I abhor war and bloodshed as much as you do; but unless the earth is purged of such monsters, peace and morality will never return. This is not a war of nation and nation; it is the cause of everything dear and sacred to civilized man, against the unbounded licentiousness of assassins, who massacre even the generals who fight for them — not that I pity the latter; but to whom can a country be just that rewards its tools with the axe? What animal is so horrible as one that devours its own young ones?

That execrable nation overwhelms all moralizing. At any other minute the unexpected death of Lady Falmouth would be striking: yet I am sorry for Mrs. Boscawen. I have been ill for six weeks with the gout, and am just recovered: yet I remember it less than the atrocities of France; and I remember, if possible, with greater indignation, their traitors here at home; amongst whom are your antagonists. Do not apologize for talking of them and yourself. Punish them not by answering, but by supporting the good cause, and by stigmatizing the most impudent impiety that ever was avowed.

Mrs. Garrick dined here to-day, with some of the quality of Hampton and Richmond. She appears quite well, and was very cheerful: I wish you were as well recovered. Do you remember how ill I found you both last year in the Adelphi? Adieu! thou excellent champion, as well as practiser, of all goodness. Let the vile abuse vented against you be balm to your mind: your writings must have done great service, when they have so much provoked the enemy. All who have religion or principle must revere your name. Who would not be hated by Duponts and Dantons? — and if ab-

¹ Miss More had said, — “ These mad monkeys of the Convention do contrive to enliven my unappeasable indignation against them with occasional provocatives to mirth. How do you like the egregious inventions of the anniversary follies of the 10th of August ? ” — E.

horrence of atheism implies Popery, reckon it a compliment to be called Papist. The French have gone such extravagant lengths, that to preach or practise massacres is, with them, the sole test of merit — of patriotism. Just in one point only they have merit; they sacrifice the blackest criminals with as much alacrity as the most innocent or the most virtuous: but I beg your pardon; I know not how to stop when I talk of these ruffians. Yours, most cordially and most sincerely.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday evening, eight o'clock, Oct. 15, 1793.

THOUGH I do not know when it will have its whole lading, I must begin my letter this very moment, to tell you what I have just heard. I called on the Princesse d'Hennin, who has been in town a week. I found her quite alone, and I thought she did not answer quite clearly about her two knights: the Prince de Poix has taken a lodging in town, and she talks of letting her house here, if she can. In short, I thought she had a little of an Ariadne-air — but this was not what I was in such a hurry to tell you. She showed me several pieces of letters, I think from the Duchesse de Bouillon: one says, the poor Duchesse de Biron is again arrested and at the Jacobins,¹ and with her “une jeune étourdie, qui ne fait que chanter toute la journée;” and who, think you, may that be?—only our pretty little wicked Duchesse de Fleury! by her singing and not sobbing, I suppose she was weary of her *Tircis*, and is glad to be rid of him. This new blow, I fear, will upset Madame de Biron again. The rage at Paris seems to increase daily or hourly; they either despair, or are now avowed banditti. I tremble so much for the great and most suffering victim of all, the Queen, that one cannot feel so much for many, as several perhaps deserve: but her tortures have been of far longer

¹ The Duchesse perished under the guillotine in the following year. See *antè*, p. 441.—E.

duration than any martyrs, and more various; and her courage and patience equal to her woes!¹

My poor old friend, the Duchesse de la Valière, past ninety and stone-deaf, has a guard set upon her, but in her own house; her daughter, the Duchesse de Chatillon, mother of the Duchesse de la Tremouille, is arrested; and thus the last, with her attachment to the Queen, must be miserable indeed!—But one would think I feel for nothing but Duchesses: the crisis has crowded them together into my letter, and into a prison;—and to be prisoner among cannibals is pitiable indeed!

Thursday morning, 17th, past ten.

I this moment receive the very comfortable twin-letter. I am so conjugal, and so much in earnest upon the article of recovery, that I cannot think of *a pretty thing* to say to very pretty Mrs. Stanhope; nor do I know what would be a pretty thing in these days. I might come out with some old-fashioned compliment, that would have been very genteel

In good Queen Bess's golden day, when I was a dame of honour.

Let Mrs. Stanhope² imagine that I have said all she deserves: I certainly think it, and will ratify it, when I have learnt the

¹ On the 16th of October, a few hours after Walpole had penned the above letter, the unfortunate Marie Antoinette was conducted, amidst a great concourse of the populace, to the fatal spot, where, ten months before, Louis the Sixteenth had perished. "Sorrow had blanched her once beautiful hair; but her features and air commanded the admiration of all who beheld her. Her cheeks, pale and emaciated, were occasionally tinged with a vivid colour at the mention of those she had lost. When led out to execution, she was dressed in white; she had cut off her hair with her own hands. Placed in a tumbrel, with her arms tied behind her, she was taken to the Place de la Révolution. She listened with calmness to the exhortations of the ecclesiastic who accompanied her, and cast an indifferent look at the people who had so often applauded her beauty and her grace, and who now as warmly applauded her execution. On reaching the foot of the scaffold, she perceived the Tuileries, and appeared to be moved; but she hastened to ascend the fatal ladder, and gave herself up with courage to the executioner. The infamous wretch exhibited her head to the people, as he was accustomed to do when he had sacrificed an illustrious victim. The Jacobins were overjoyed. 'Let these tidings be carried to Austria,' said they; 'the Romans sold the ground occupied by Hannibal; we strike off the heads that are dearest to the sovereigns who have invaded our territory.'" See Thiers, vol. iii. p. 196, and Lacretelle, tom. xi. p. 261.—E.

² The wife of Colonel Stanhope, brother of the Earl of Harrington.

language of the nineteenth century; but I really am so ancient, that as Pythagoras imagined he had been Panthoides Euphorbus in the Trojan war, I am not sure that I did not ride upon a pillion behind a gentleman-usher, when her Majesty Elizabeth went in procession to St. Paul's on the defeat of the Armada! Adieu! the postman puts an end to my idle speculations — but, Scarborough for ever! with three huzzas!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 7, 1793.

I OFTEN lay the egg of my journals two or three days before they are hatched. This may make some of my articles a little stale before you get them; but then you know they are the more authentic, if the Echo has not told me to unsay them — and, if a Prince of Wales drops a thumping victory at my door as he goes by, you have it hot out of the oven — though, as happened lately, not half baked.¹

The three last newspapers are much more favourable than you seemed to expect. Nieuport has been saved; Ostend is safe. The Royalists in La Vendée are not demolished, as the Convention of Liars asserted. Strasbourg seems likely to fall. At Toulon even the Neapolitans, on whom you certainly did not reckon, have behaved like heroes. As Admiral Gravina is so hearty, though his master makes no progress in France, I suspect that the sovereign of so many *home* kingdoms is a little afraid of trusting his army beyond the borders, lest the Catalans should have something of the old — or *new* leaven. In the mean time, it is still more provoking to hear of Catherine Slay-Czar sitting on her throne and playing with royal marriages, without sending a single ship or regiment to support the cause of Europe, and to punish the Men of the Mountain, who really are the assassins that the Crusaders supposed or believed existed in Asia! Oh! Marie Antoinette, what a contrast between you and Petruchia!

¹ This alludes to some false report of the time.

Domestic news are scanty, but dismal, and you have seen them anticipated; as the loss of the young Lord Montague¹ and Mr. Burdett,² drowned in a cataract in Switzerland, by their own obstinate folly.³ Mr. Tickell's death was a determined measure, and more shocking than the usual mode by a pistol. He threw himself from one of the uppermost windows of the palace at Hampton Court, into the garden—an immense height! Some attribute his despair to debts; some to a breach with his political friends. I was not acquainted with, but am sorry for him, as I liked his writings.⁴

Our weather remains unparagoned; Mrs. Hastings is not more brilliant: the elms are evergreens. I a little regret your not seeing how beautiful Cliveden can be on the 7th of November; ay, and how warm. Then the pheasants, partridges, and hares from Houghton, that you lose: they would have exceeded Camacho's wedding, and Sancho Panza would have talked chapters about them. I am forced to send them about the neighbourhood, as if I were making interest to be chosen for the united royal burghs of Richmond and Hampton Court.—But all this is not worth sending: I must wait for a better *bouche*. I want Wurmser to be Cæsar, and send me more Commentaries de Bello Gallico. What do you say to those wretches who have created *Death an endless Sleep*,⁵ that nobody may boggle at any crime for fear of hell? Methinks they have no reason to dread the terrors of conscience in any Frenchman!

¹ Lord Viscount Montague was the last male heir of a most noble and ancient family, in a lineal descent from the Lady Lucy Nevill.—E.

² Charles Sedley Burdett, second son of Francis Burdett, Esq. and brother of Francis, who, on the death of his grandfather, Sir Robert Burdett, in 1797, succeeded to the baronetcy.—E.

³ They insisted on shooting down the great fall of the Rhine at Schaffhausen in a boat, against the remonstrances of the neighbouring inhabitants, and their refusal of every bribe, either to assist or accompany them. They and their boat were shattered to pieces, and their remains were found some days after, at a considerable distance from the scene of their mad exploit.

⁴ Richard Tickell, Esq. author of “Anticipation,” the “Wreath of Fashion,” and other poems. He was a commissioner of the stamp-office, and brother-in-law to Richard Brinsley Sheridan.—E.

⁵ “C'est ici l'asile du sommeil éternel,” was the republican inscription over all the public cemeteries. Pache, Hébert, and Chaumette, the leaders

November 10th.

Hiatus non deflendus; for I have neither heard a word, nor had a word to say these three days. Victories do not come every tide, like mackerel, or prizes in the Irish lottery. Yesterday's paper discounted a little of Neapolitan valour; but, as even the Dutch sometimes fight upon recollection, and as there was no account yet of O'Hara's arrival at Toulon, I hope he will laugh or example lor' Signori into spirit.

You will wonder at my resuming my letter, when I profess having nothing to add to it; but yours of the 7th is just arrived, and I could not make this commenced sheet lie quiet in my writing-box: it would begin gossiping with your letter, though I vowed it shall not set out till to-morrow. "Why, you empty thing," said I, "how do you know but there may have been a Gazette last night, crammed with vast news, which, as no paper comes out on Sundays, we shall not learn here; and would you be such a goose as to creep through Brentford and Hammersmith and Kensington, where the bells may be drinking some general's health, and will scoff you for asking whose? Indeed you shall not stir before to-morrow. Lysons is returned from Gloucestershire, and is to dine here to-day; and he will at least bring us a brick, like Harlequin, as a pattern of any town that we may have taken. Moreover, no post sets out from London on Sunday nights, and you would only sit guzzling—I don't mean you, Miss Berry, but you, my letter—with the clerks of the post-office. Patience till to-morrow."

We have had some rain, even this last night; but the weather is fine all day, and quite warm. I believe it has made an assignation with the Glastonbury Thorn, and that

of the municipality, publicly expressed their determination to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the kings of the earth. Gobel, the constitutional Bishop of Paris, disowned at the bar of the Convention the existence of a God. On the 10th of November, a female, whom they termed the Goddess of Reason, was admitted within the bar, and placed on the right hand of the president. After receiving the fraternal hug, she was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted to the church of Notre Dame, to take the place of the Holy of Holies; and thenceforth that ancient and imposing cathedral was called "the Temple of Reason." See Thiers, vol. iii. p. 225, and Lacretelle, tom. xi. p. 306.—E.

they are to dance together on old Christmas-day. What could I do with myself in London? All my playthings are here, and I have no playfellows left there! Lady Herries's and poor Mrs. Hunter's¹ are shut up. Even the "one game more at cribbage"² after supper is on table, which is not my supreme felicity, though accompanied by the Tabor and Pipe,³ is in the country — or, to say all in a word, North Audley-street is in Yorkshire! Reading composes little of my pastime, either in town or country. A catalogue of books and prints, or a dull history of a county, amuse me sufficiently; for now I cannot open a French book, as it would keep alive ideas that I want to banish from my thoughts. When I am tired at home, I go and sit an hour or two with the ladies of Murray,⁴ or the Doyleys, and find them conversable and comfortable; and my pessime aller is Richmond.

Monday morning, 11th.

Lysons⁵ has been drawing churches in Gloucestershire, and digging out a Roman villa and mosaic pavement near Cirencester, which he means to publish: but he knew nothing *outlandish*; so if the newspaper does not bring me something fresh for you presently, this limping letter must set out with its empty wallet. Mrs. Piozzi is going to publish a book on English Synonymes. Methinks she had better have studied them, before she stuffed her Travels with so many vulgarisms!⁶

¹ Widow of Dr. John Hunter.

² A manner of designating the Countess of Ailesbury.

³ Two old ladies of his society, whom he thus called.

⁴ Sisters to the great Earl of Mansfield.

⁵ Samuel Lysons, Esq. brother of the Rev. Daniel Lysons, of whom a notice has been given at p. 345, and author of several works relating to the Roman Antiquities of Great Britain. He also published, in conjunction with his brother, the earlier volumes of the "*Magna Britannica*." In 1804, he succeeded Mr. Astle as keeper of the records in the Tower of London; which office he held till his death in 1819. Mr. Mathias, in November 1797, described him as "one of the most judicious, best-informed, and most learned amateur antiquaries in the kingdom in his department;" and his work on the remains of the Roman villa and pavements near Gloucester, as "such a specimen of ingenuity, unwearied zeal, and critical accuracy in delineating and illustrating the fragments of antiquity, as rarely had been equalled, certainly never surpassed." See Pursuits of Literature.—E.

⁶ The following is Mr. Gifford's opinion of the qualifications of the

TO MISS BERRY.

Berkeley Square, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 1793.

I BEGIN my last letter to Bransby, that I may have it ready to send away the moment I shall have anything worth telling; which I certainly have not yet. What is become of Lord Howe and Co. you may guess if you please, as everybody is doing—

I'm weary of conjectures—

but shall not end them like Cato, because I take the fate of a whole fleet a little more likely to come to a solution than doubts in metaphysics; and if Lord Howe should at last bring home two or three French men-of-war, one would not be out of the way to receive them. In the mean time, let us chat as if the destiny of half Europe were not at this moment in agitation.

I went on Monday evening with Mrs. Damer to the little Haymarket, to see "The Children in the Wood," having heard so much of my favourite, young Bannister, in that new piece; which, by the way, is well arranged, and near being fine.¹ He more than answered my expectation, and all I had heard of him. It was one of the most admirable performances I ever saw: his transports of despair and joy are incomparable, and his various countenances would be adequate to the pencil of Salvator Rosa. He made me shed as many tears as I sup-

lady for such a work:—"Though 'no one better knows his own house' than I the vanity of this woman; yet the idea of her undertaking it had never entered my head; and I was thunderstruck when I first saw it announced. To execute it with any tolerable degree of success, required a rare combination of talents, among the least of which may be numbered neatness of style, acuteness of perception, and a more than common accuracy of discrimination; and Mrs. Piozzi brought to the task, a jargon long since become proverbial for its vulgarity, an utter incapacity of defining a single term in the language, and just as much Latin from a child's syntax as sufficed to expose the ignorance she so anxiously labours to conceal." See Baviad and Mæviad.—E.

¹ See the Memoirs of this admirable comedian, by Mr. Adolphus, recently published in two volumes octavo. The drama here spoken of was the production of Mr. Morton, and formed from the ancient ballad of the cruel uncle who murdered his brother's children in a wood, that he might inherit the family estate.—E.

pose the original old ballad did when I was six years old. Bannister's merit was the more striking, as, before "The Children in the Wood," he had been playing the sailor in "No Song no Supper," with equal nature. I wish I could hope to be as much pleased to-morrow night, when I am to go to Jer-ningham's play; but there is no Bannister at Covent-garden!

On Sunday night I found the Comte de Coigni¹ at Lady Lucan's. He was to set out the next morning with Lord Moira's expedition as *a common soldier*. This sounded decent and well; but you may guess that he had squeezed a little Frenchism into his intention, and had asked for a vessel and some soldiers to attend him. I don't know whether he has condescended to go without them. I asked him about his daughter: he said, he did not believe she was in prison. Others say, it is the Duchesse de Fleury, her mother-in-law. I have been surprised at not seeing or hearing anything of poor Fleury;² but I am told he has been forced to abscond, having narrowly escaped being arrested by a coachmaker, to whom he owed five hundred pounds for carriages: which, to be sure, he must have had, or bespoken, at Paris before the revolution.

Thursday noon.

Yesterday came a letter to the Admiralty, notifying that Lord Howe has taken five of the Brest squadron: but this intelligence is derived through so many somebodys, that handed it to somebodys, that I am not much inclined, except by wishing it true, to believe it. However, the wind is got much more to the west, and now we shall probably not remain much longer in total darkness.

Three o'clock.

Another account is come to Mrs. Nugent's³ from her husband, with the same story of the five captive French men-of-war; and so that reading is admitted: but for my part, I will admit nothing but under Lord Howe's own hand. It is tire-

¹ Younger brother of the Duc de Coigni, the grand-écuyer of Marie Antoinette, and great-uncle of the present Duc de Coigni.

² The Duc de Fleury, the Count de Coigni's son-in-law.

³ The wife of Admiral Nugent.

some to be like the scene in *Amphitryon*, and cry one minute "Obvious, obvious!" and the next "Dubious, dubious!" Such fluctuability is fit only for a stock-jobber. Adieu! I must dress and dine, or I shall not be ready to wait on your grandfather Seton.¹

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Friday, December 13, 1793.

You will not wonder at my dulness about the time of your setting out, and of the *gîtes* you are to make on the road: you are used to my fits of incomprehension; and, as is natural at my age, I believe they increase. What augmented them was my eagerness to be sure of every opportunity of sending you the earliest intelligence of every event that may happen at this critical period. That impatience has sometimes made me too precipitate in my information. I believed Lord Howe's success too rapidly: you have seen by all the newspapers, that both the ministers and the public were equally credulous, from the collateral channels that imported such assertions! Well! if you have been disappointed of capturing five or six French men-of-war, you must at present stay your appetite by some handsome slices of St. Domingo, and by plentiful goblets of French blood shed by the Duke of Brunswick; which we firmly believe, though the official intelligence was not arrived last night. His Highness, who has been so serene for above a year, seems to have waked to some purpose; and, which is not less propitious, his victory indicates that his principal, the King of Prussia, has added no more French jewels to his regalia. I shall like to hear the National Convention accuse him of being bribed by a contrary *Pitt's* diamond.²

Here is another comfortable symptom: it looks as if Robespierre would give up Barrère. How fortunate that Beelzebubs and Molochs peach one another, like human highway-

¹ He means Mr. Jerningham's play, the *Siege of Berwick*.

² He means bribed by the then prime minister.

men! I will tell you a reflection I have made, and which shows how the worst monsters counteract their own councils. Many formerly, who meant to undermine religion, began by sapping the belief of a devil. *Now*, by denying God, they have restored Satan to his throne, or will; though the present system is a republic of fiends. The Pandemonium below recalls its agents, as if they were only tribunes of the people elected by temporary factions. Barnave, called the Butcher in the first Convention, is gone, like Orleans and Brissot. If we do not presume to interpret *judgments*, I wonder the monsters themselves do not: enough has happened already to warn them of their own fate!

The Conways are in town for two or three days: they came for Mr. Jerningham's play. Harris had at last allowed him the fourth night; and he had a good night. I have a card from Lady Amherst for Monday; and shall certainly go, as my lord behaved so nobly about your cousin.¹ I have another from the Margravine of Anspach, to sup at Hammersmith; whither I shall certainly not go, but plead the whole list of chronical distempers. Do you think, if the whole circle of Princes of Westphalia were to ask me for next *Thursday evening*,² that I would accept the invitation?

Saturday, Dec. 14, 1793.

I am glad this is to be the last of my gazettes. I am tired of notifying and recalling the articles of news: not that I am going to dis-laurel the Duke of Brunswick; but not a sprig is yet come in confirmation. Military critics even conjecture, by the journals from Manheim and Frankfort, that the German victories have not been much more than repulses of the French, and have been bought dearly. I have inclined to believe the best from Wurmser; but I confess my best hopes are from the factions of Paris. If the gangrene does not gain the core, how calculate the duration? It has already baffled all computation, all conjecture. One wonders now that

¹ Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, had appointed a cousin of Miss Berry's to an ensigncy, on his recommendation.

² When the persons addressed were to arrive in London.

France, in its totality, was not more fatal to Europe than even it was. Is not it astonishing, that after five years of such havoc, such emigrations, expulsions, massacres, annihilation of commerce, evanition of specie, and real or impending famine, they can still furnish and support armies against us and the Austrians in Flanders, against the Duke of Brunswick and Wurmser, against us at Toulon, against the King of Sardinia, against Spain, against the Royalists in La Vendée, and along the coast against our expedition under Lord Moira; and though we have got fifteen of their men-of-war at Toulon, they have sixteen, or more, at Brest, and are still impertinent with a fry of privateers? Consider, too, that all this spirit is kept up by the most extravagant lies, delusions, rhodomontade; by the extirpation of the usual root of enthusiasm, religion; and by the terror of murder, that ought to revolt all mankind. If such a system of destruction does not destroy itself, there is an end of that *ignis fatuus*, human reason; and French policy must govern, or exterminate mankind.

I this moment received your Thursday's note, with that for your housekeeper, who is in town, and with those sweet words, "You need not leave a card; we shall be at home." I do not believe I shall send you an excuse. Marshal Conway has stepped in to tell me, he has just met with his nephew, Lord Yarmouth,¹ who has received a letter from a foreign minister at Manheim, who asserts all the Duke of Brunswick's victories, and the destruction or dispersion of the French army in that quarter. The Earl maintains, that the King of Prussia's politics are totally changed to the right, and that eighteen thousand more of his troops have joined the allies. I should like to know, and to have the Convention know, that the murder of the Queen of France has operated this revulsion.

I hope I send you no more falsehoods—at least, you must allow, that it is not on bad authority. If Lord Howe has disappointed you, will you accept the prowess of the virago his sister, Mrs. Howe.² As soon as it was known that her

¹ The present Marquis of Hertford.

² A person of distinguished abilities. She possessed an extraordinary

brother had failed, a Jacobin mob broke her windows, mistaking them for his. She lifted up the sash, and harangued them; told them, that was not the house of her brother, who lives in the other part of Grafton-street, and that she herself is a widow, and that *that* house is hers. She stilled the waves, and they dispersed quietly.

There! There end my volumes, to my great satisfaction! If we are to have any bonfires or illuminations, you will be here to light them yourselves. Adieu to Yorkshire!

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 10, 1794.

I CERTAINLY sympathize with you on the reversed and gloomy prospect of affairs, too extensive to detail in a letter; nor indeed do I know anything more than I collect from newspapers and public reports; and those are so overcharged with falsehoods on all sides, that, if one waits for truth to emerge, one finds new subjects to draw one's attention before firm belief can settle its trust on any. That the mass and result are bad, is certain; and though I have great alacrity in searching for comforts and grounds of new hopes, I am puzzled as much in seeking resources, as in giving present credit. Reasoning is out of the question: all calculation is baffled: nothing happens that sense or experience said was probable. I wait to see what will happen, without a guess at what is to be expected. A storm, when the Parliament meets, will no doubt be attempted. How the ministers are prepared to combat it, I don't know, but I hope

force of mind, clearness of understanding, and remarkable powers of thought and combination. She retained them unimpaired to the great age of eighty-five, by exercising them daily, both in the practice of mathematics and in reading the two dead languages; of which, late in life, she had made herself mistress. To those acquirements must be added warm and lively feelings, joined to a perfect knowledge of the world, and of the society of which she had always been a distinguished member. Mr. Walpole, from misinformation of her conduct towards a friend of his in earlier life, had never done justice to her character—a mistake, in which she did not participate, relative to him.—M. B.

sufficiently, if it spreads no farther: at least I think they have no cause to fear the new leader who is to make the attack.

I have neither seen Mr. Wilson's book¹ nor his answerers. So far from reading political pamphlets, I hunt for any books, except modern novels, that will not bring France to my mind, or that at least will put it out for a time. But every fresh person one sees, revives the conversation: and excepting a long succession of fogs, nobody talks of anything else; nor of private news do I know a tittle. Adieu!

TO MISS BERRY.

Thursday evening, April 16, 1794.

I AM delighted that you have such good weather for your *villeggiatura*. The sun has not appeared here to-day; yet it has been so warm, that he may not be gone out of town, and only keeps in because it is unfashionable to be seen in London at Easter. All my evening customers are gone, except Mrs. Damer, and she is at home to-night with the Greatheds and Mrs. Siddons, and a few more; and she had a mind I should go to her. I had a mind too; but think myself still too weak: after confinement for fourteen weeks, it seems formidable to sally forth. I have heard no novelty since you went, but of more progress in Martinico; on which it is said there is to be a Gazette, and which, I suppose, gave a small fillip to the stocks this morning: though my Jew, whom I saw again this morning, ascribed the rise to expectation in the City of news of a counter-revolution at Paris;—but a revolution *to be*, generally proves an addled egg.

The Gazette arrives, and little of Martinico remained unconquered. The account from Sir Charles Gray is one continued panegyric on the conduct of our officers, soldiers, and

¹ It was entitled "A Letter, Commercial and Political, addressed to the Right Hon. William Pitt; by Jasper Wilson, jun. Esq." The real author was Dr. Currie, the friend of Mr. Wilberforce; who commends it, "as exhibiting originality of thought and force of expression, and solving finely the phenomena of revolutions." See *Life*, vol. ii. p. 13.—E.

sailors; who do not want to be driven on *à la Dumourier*, by cannon behind them and on both sides. A good quantity of artillery and stores is taken too, and only two officers and about seventy men killed. There is a codicil to the Gazette, with another post taken — the map, I suppose, knows where; I do not — but you, who are a geographess, will, or easily find it out.

At my levee before dinner, I had Mrs. Buller, Lady Lucan, Sir Charles Blagden, Mr. Coxe, and Mr. Gough. This was a good day; I have not always so welcome a circle. I have run through both volumes of Mrs. Piozzi. Here and there she does not want parts, has some good translations, and stories that are new; particularly an admirable bon-mot of Lord Chesterfield, which I never heard before, but dashed with her cruel vulgarisms: see vol. ii. p. 291. The story, I dare to say, never happened, but was invented by the Earl himself, to introduce his reply. The sun never was the emblem of Louis Quinze, but of Louis Quatorze; in whose time his lordship was not ambassador, nor the Czarina Empress: nor, foolish as some ambassadors are, could two of them propose devices for toasts; as if, like children, they were playing at pictures and mottoes: and what the Signora styles a *public toast*, the Earl, I conclude, called a *great dinner* then. I have picked out a motto for her work in her own words, and written it on the title-page: "Simplicity cannot please without eloquence!" Now I think *on't*, let me ask if you have been as much diverted as you was at first? and have not two such volumes sometimes set you *o' yawning*? It is comic, that in a treatise on synonymous words, she does not know which are and which are not so. In the chapter on worth, she says, "The worth even of money fluctuates in our *state*;" instead of saying, in this *country*. Her very title is wrong; as she does not even mention synonymous Scottish words: it ought to be called, not British, but English Synonymy.

Mr. Courtenay has published some epistles in rhyme, in which he has honoured me with a dozen lines, and which are really some of the best in the whole set—in ridicule of my

writings. One couplet, I suppose, alludes to my Strawberry Verses on you and your sister. Les voici —

“Who to love tunes his note, with the fire of old age,
And chirps the trim lay in a trim Gothic cage !”

If I were not as careless as I am about literary fame, still this censure would be harmless indeed; for, except the exploded story of Chatterton, of which I washed myself as white as snow, Mr. Courtenay falls on my choice of subjects — as of Richard the Third and the Mysterious Mother — and not on the execution; though I fear there is enough to blame in the texture of them. But this new piece of criticism, or whatever it is, made me laugh, as I am offered up on the tomb of my poor mad nephew; who is celebrated for one of his last frantic acts, a publication in some monthly magazine, with an absurd hypothesis on “the moon bursting from the earth, and the earth from the sun, somehow or other:” but how, indeed, especially from Mr. Courtenay’s paraphrase, I have too much sense to comprehend. However, I am much obliged to him for having taken such pains to distinguish me from my lunatic precursor, that even the European Magazine, when I shall die, will not be able to confound us. Richard the Third would be sorry to have it thought hereafter, that I had ever been under the care of Dr. Munro. Well ! good night !

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

April 27, 1794.

THIS is no plot to draw you into committing even a good deed on a Sunday, which I suppose the *literality* of your conscience would haggle about, as if the day of the week constitutes the sin, and not the nature of the crime. But you may defer your answer till to-night is become to-morrow by the clock having struck one; and then you may do an innocent thing without any guilt, which a quarter of an hour sooner you would think abominable. Nay, as an Irishman would say, you need not even *read* this note till the canonical hour is past.

In short, my dear Madam, I gave your obliging message to Lady Waldegrave, who will be happy to see you on Tuesday, at one o'clock. But as her staircase is very bad, as she is in a lodging, I have proposed that this meeting, for which I have been pimping between two female saints, may be held here in my house, as I had the utmost difficulty last night in climbing her *scala santa*, and I cannot undertake it again. But if you are so good as to send me a favourable answer to-morrow, I will take care you shall find her here at the time I mentioned, with your true admirer.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, Sept. 27, 1794.

I HAVE been in town, as I told you I should, but gleaned nothing worth repeating, or I would have written this morning before I came away. The Churchills left me on Thursday, and were succeeded by the Marshal and Mr. Taylor, who dined and stayed all night. I am now alone, having reserved this evening to answer your long, and Agnes's short letter; but in this single one to both, for I have not matter enough for a separate maintenance.

I went yesterday to Mrs. Damer, and had a glimpse of her new house; literally a glimpse, for I saw but one room on the first floor, where she had lighted a fire, that I might not mount two flights: and as it was eight o'clock, and quite dark, she only opened a door or two, and gave me a *cat's-eye* view into them. One blemish I had descried at first; the house has a corner arrival, like her father's. Ah, me! who do not love to be led through the public. I did see the new bust of Mrs. Siddons, and a very mistressly performance it is indeed. Mrs. Damer was surprised at my saying I should expect you after another week; she said, you had not talked of returning near so soon. I do not mention this, as if to gainsay your intention; on the contrary, I hope and beg you will stay as long as either of you thinks she finds the least benefit from it; and after that, too, as long as you both like to stay. I re-

proached myself so sadly, and do still, for having dragged you from Italy sooner than you intended, and I am so grateful for your having had that complaisance, that unless I grow quite superannuated, I think I shall not be so selfish as to combat the inclination of either again. It is natural for me to delight in your company; but I do not even wish for it, if it lays you under any restraint. I have lived a thousand years to little purpose, if I have not learned that half a century more than the age of one's friends is not an *agrément de plus*.

I wish you had seen Canterbury some years ago, before they whitewashed it; for it is so coarsely daubed, and thence the gloom is so totally destroyed, and so few tombs remain for so vast a mass, that I was shocked at the nudity of the whole. If you should go thither again, make the Cicerone show you a pane of glass in the east window, which does open, and exhibits a most delicious view of the ruins of St. Austin's.

Mention of Canterbury furnishes me with a very suitable opportunity for telling you a remarkable story, which I had from Lady Onslow t'other night, and which was related to her by Lord Ashburnham, on whose veracity you may depend. In the hot weather of this last summer, his lordship's very old uncle, the Bishop of Chichester,¹ was waked in his palace at four o'clock in the morning by his bed-chamber door being opened, when a female figure, all in white, entered, and sat down near him. The prelate, who protests he was not frightened, said in a tone of authority, but not with the usual triple adjuration, "Who are you?" Not a word of reply; but the personage heaved a profound sigh. The Bishop rang the bell; but the servants were so sound asleep, that nobody heard him. He repeated his question: still no answer; but another deep sigh. Then the apparition took some papers out of the ghost of its pocket, and began to read them to itself. At last, when the Bishop had continued to ring, and nobody to come, the spectre rose and departed as sedately as

¹ The Right Rev. Sir William Ashburnham, Bart. His lordship died at a very advanced age, in September 1797. He was the father of the bench, and the only bishop not appointed by George the Third.—E.

it had arrived. When the servants did at length appear, the Bishop cried, "Well! what have you seen?" "Seen, my lord!" "Ay, seen; or who, what is the woman that has been here?" "Woman! my lord!" (I believe one of the fellows smiled; though, to do her justice, Lady Onslow did not say so.) In short, when my lord had related his vision, his domestics did humbly apprehend that his lordship had been dreaming; and so did his whole family the next morning, for in this our day even a bishop's household does not believe in ghosts: and yet it is most certain that the good man had been in no dream, and told nothing but what he had seen; for, as the story circulated, and diverted the ungodly at the prelate's expense, it came at last to the ears of a keeper of a mad-house in the diocese, who came and deposed, that a female lunatic under his care had escaped from his custody, and, finding the gate of the palace open, had marched up to my lord's chamber. The deponent further said, that his prisoner was always reading a bundle of papers. I have known stories of ghosts, solemnly authenticated, less credible; and I hope you will believe this, attested by a father of our own church.

Sunday night, 28th, 1794.

I have received another letter from dear Mary, of the 26th; and here is one for sweet Agnes enclosed. By her account of Broadstairs, I thought you at the North Pole; but if you are, the whales must be metamorphosed into gigs and whiskies, or split into them, as heathen gods would have done, or Rich the harlequin. You talk of Margate, but say nothing of Kingsgate, where Charles Fox's father scattered buildings of all sorts, but in no style of architecture that ever appeared before or has since, and in no connexion with or to any other, and in all directions; and yet the oddity and number made that naked, though fertile soil, smile and look cheerful. Do you remember Gray's bitter lines on him and his vagaries and history?¹

¹ Entitled "Impromptu, suggested by a view, in 1766, of the seat and ruins of a deceased Nobleman, at Kingsgate, Kent." See Gray's Works, vol. i. p. 161, ed. 1836.—E.

I wish on your return, if in good weather, you would contrive to visit Mr. Barrett's at Lee; it is but four miles from Canterbury. You will see a child of Strawberry prettier than the parent, and so executed and so finished! There is a delicious closet, too, so flattering to me; and a prior's library so antique, and that does such honour to Mr. Wyat's taste! Mr. Barrett, I am most sure, would be happy to show his house to you; and I know, if you tell him that I beg it, he will produce the portrait of Anne of Cleve by Holbein, in the identical ivory-box, turned like a Provence rose, as it was brought over for Henry the Eighth. It will be a great favour, and it must be a fine day; for it lives in cotton and clover, and he justly dreads exposing it to any damp. He has some other good pictures; and the whole place is very pretty, though retired.

The Sunday's paper announces a dismal defeat of Clairfait; and now, if true, I doubt the French will drive the Duke of York into Holland, and then into the sea! *Ora pro nobis!*

P.S. If this is not a long letter, I do not know what is. The story of the ghost should have arrived on this, which is St. Goose's-day, or the commemoration of the ignoble army of martyrs, who have suffered in the persecution under that gormandizing archangel St. Michael.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, Oct. 7, 1794.

YOUR answer, which I own arrived a day sooner than I flattered myself it would — I wish it could have told me how you passed the storm of Sunday night — has not only relieved me from all anxiety on the subject, but has made me exceedingly happy; for though I mistook you for a moment, it has proved to me, that I had judged perfectly rightly of your excellent and most uncommon understanding. Astonished I was, no doubt, while I conceived that you wished to be placed in a situation so unworthy of your talents and abilities and

knowledge, and powers of conversation.¹ I never was of a court myself; but from my birth and the position of my father, could but, for my first twenty years, know much of the nature of the beast; and, from my various connections since, I have seldom missed farther opportunities of keeping up my acquaintance even with the interior. The world in general is not ignorant of the complexion of most courts; though ambition, interest, and vanity are always willing to leap over their information, or to fancy they can counteract it: but I have no occasion to probe that delusion, nor to gainsay your random opinion, that a court life may be eligible for women. Yes, for the idle ones you specify, perhaps so;—for respectable women I think much less than even for men. I do not mean with regard to what is called their *character*; as if there were but *one* virtue with which women have any concern—I speak of their understanding, and consequential employment of their time. In a court there must be much idleness, even without dissipation; and amongst the female constituents, much self-importance ill-founded; some ambition, jealousy, envy—and thence hatred, insincerity, little intrigues for credit, and—but I am talking as if there were any occasion to dissuade you from what you despise; and I have only stated what occasioned my surprise at your thinking of what you never did think at all.

Still, while I did suppose that in any pore of your heart there did lurk such a wish, I did give a great gulp and swallowed down all attempts to turn your thoughts aside from it—and why? Yes, and you must be ready to ask me, how such a true friend could give into the hint without such numerous objections to a plan so unsuitable for you! Oh! for strong reasons too. In the first place, I was sure, that, without my almost century of experience, your good sense must have anticipated all my arguments. You often confute my desultory logic on points less important, as I frequently find; but the true cause of my assenting, without suffering a sigh to

¹ This alludes to a wish he supposed Miss Berry to have had for a nomination in the household of Caroline Princess of Wales, then forming.—M. B.

escape me was, because I was conscious that I could not dissuade you fairly, without a grain or more of *self* mixing in the argument. I would not trust myself with myself. I would not act again as I did when you was in Italy; and answered you as fast as I could, lest self should relapse. Yet, though it did not last an hour, what a combat it was! What a blow to my dream of happiness, should you be attached to a court! for though you, probably, would not desert Cliveden entirely, how distracted would your time be!—But I will not enter into the detail of my thoughts; you know how many posts they travel in a moment, when my brain is set at work, and how firmly it believes all it imagines: besides the defalcation of your society, I saw the host of your porphyrogeniti, from *top* to bottom, bursting on my tranquillity. But enough; I conquered all these dangers, and still another objection rose: when I had discovered the only channel I could open to your satisfaction, I had no little repugnance to the emissary I was to employ.¹ Though it is my intention to be equitable to him, I should be extremely sorry to give him a shadow of claim on me; and you know those who might hereafter be glad to conclude, that it was no wonder they should be disappointed, when gratitude on your account had been my motive.—But my cares are at an end; and though I have laboured through two painful days, the thorns of which were sharpened, not impeded, by the storm, I am rejoiced at the blunder I made, as it has procured me the kindest, and most heart-dictated, and most heartfelt letter, that ever was written; for which I give you millions of thanks. Forgive my injurious surmise; for you see, that though you can wound my affection, you cannot allay its eagerness to please you, at the expense of my own satisfaction and peace.

Having stated with most precise truth all I thought related to *yourself*, I do resume and repeat all I have said both in this and my former letter, and renew exactly the same offers to my sweet Agnes, if she has the least wish for what I supposed you wished. Nay, I owe still more to her; for I

¹ His nephew, Lord Cholmondeley.

think she left Italy more unwillingly than you did, and gratitude to either is the only circumstance that can add to my affection for either. I can swallow my objections to trying my nephew as easily for her as for you; but, having had two days and a half for thinking the whole case over, I have no sort of doubt but the whole establishment must be completely settled by this time; or that, at most, if any places are not fixed yet, it must be from the strength and variety of contending interests: and, besides, the new Princess will have fewer of each class of attendants than a Queen; and I shall not be surprised if there should already be a *brouillerie* between the two courts about some or many of the nominations: and though the interest I thought of trying was the only one I could pitch upon, I do not, on reflection, suppose that a person just favoured has favour enough already to recommend others. Hereafter that may be better; and a still more feasible method, I think, would be to obtain a promise against a vacancy; which, at this great open moment nobody will think of asking, when the present is so uppermost in their minds: and now my head is cool, perhaps I could strike out more channels, should your sister be so inclined. But of that we will talk when we meet.

Thursday.

I have received the second letter that I expected, and it makes me quite happy on all the points that disquieted me; on the court, on the tempest, and I hope on privateers, as you have so little time to stay on Ararat, and the winds that terrify me for you, will, I trust, be as formidable to them. Above all, I rejoice at your approaching return; on which I would not say a syllable seriously, not only because I would have you please yourselves, but that you may profit as much as possible by change of air. I retract all my mistake; and though, perhaps, I may have floundered on with regard to A., still I have not time to correct or write any part of it over again. Besides, every word was the truth of my heart; and why should not you see what is or was in it? Adieu!

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

October 17, 1794.

I HAD not the least doubt of Mr. Barrett's showing you the greatest attention: he is a most worthy man, and has a most sincere friendship for me, and I was sure would mark it to any persons that I love. I do not guess what your criticisms on his library will be: I do not think we shall agree in them; for to me it is the most perfect thing I ever saw, and has the most the air it was intended to have—that of an abbot's library, supposing it could have been so exquisitely finished three hundred years ago. But I am sorry he will not force Mr. Wyat to place the Mabeuse over the chimney; which is the sole defect, as not distinguished enough for the principal feature of the room. *My* closet is as perfect in its way as the library; and it would be difficult to suspect that it had not been a remnant of the ancient convent, only newly painted and gilt. *My* cabinet, nay, nor house, convey any conception; every true Goth must perceive that they are more the works of fancy than of imitation.

I believe the less that our opinions will coincide, as you speak so slightly of the situation of Lee, which I admire. What a pretty circumstance is the little river! and so far from the position being insipid, to me it has a tranquil cheerfulness that harmonizes with the house, and seems to have been the judicious selection of a wealthy abbot, who avoided ostentation, but did not choose austere gloomth. I do not say that Lee is as gay as a watering-place upon a naked beach. I am very glad, and much obliged to you for having consented to pass the night at Lee. I am sure it made Mr. Barrett very happy. I shall let him know how pleased you was; and I too, for his attentions to you.

The mass of politics is so inauspicious, that if I tapped it, I should not finish my letter for the post, and my reflections would not contribute to your amusement; which I should be sorry to interrupt, and which I beg you to pursue as long as it is agreeable to you. It is satisfaction enough to me to

know you are happy; and it is my study to make you so, as far as my little power can extend: and, as I promised you on your condescension in leaving Italy at my prayer, I will never object to whatever you like to do, and will accept, and wait with patience for, any moments you will bestow on your devoted,

ORFORD.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM BELOE.¹

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 2, 1794.

I do beg and beseech you, good Sir, to forgive me, if I cannot possibly consent to receive the dedication you are so kind and partial as to propose to me. I have in the most positive, and almost uncivil manner, refused a dedication or two lately. Compliments on virtues which the persons addressed, like me, seldom possessed, are happily exploded and laughed out of use. Next to being ashamed of having good qualities bestowed on me to which I should have no title, it would hurt to be praised on my erudition, which is most superficial; and on my trifling writings, all of which turn on most trifling subjects. They amused me while writing them; may have amused a few persons; but have nothing solid enough to preserve them from being forgotten with other things of as light a nature. I would not have your judgment called in question hereafter, if somebody reading your Aulus Gellius should ask, "What were those writings of Lord O. which Mr. Beloe so much commends? Was Lord O. more than one of the *mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease*?" Into that class I must sink; and I had rather do so imperceptibly, than to be plunged down to it by the interposition of the hand of a friend, who could not gainsay the sentence.

¹ Rector of Allhallows, London Wall, prebendary of Pancras in St. Paul's cathedral, and prebendary of Lincoln. In 1791, he published a translation of Herodotus, and in 1795, the translation of the "Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius," referred to in the above letter. He was also the author of "Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books," in six volumes octavo; and after his death, which took place in 1817, appeared "The Sexagenarian, or Recollections of a Literary Life;" which, though a posthumous publication, was printed under his inspection.—E.

For your own sake, my good Sir, as well as in pity to my feelings, who am sore at your offering what I cannot accept, restrain the address to a mere inscription. You are allowed to be an excellent translator of classic authors; how unclassic would a dedication in the old-fashioned manner appear! If you had published a new edition of Herodotus or Aulus Gellius, would you have ventured to prefix a Greek or Latin dedication to some modern lord with a Gothic title? Still less, had those addresses been in vogue at Rome, would any Roman author have inscribed his work to Marcus, the incompetent son of Cicero, and told the unfortunate offspring of so great a man, *of his high birth and declension of ambition?* which would have excited a laugh on poor Marcus, who, whatever may have been said of him, had more sense than to leave proofs to the public of his extreme inferiority to his father.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Saturday night, Jan. 24, 1795.

MY BEST MADAM,

I WILL never more complain of your silence; for I am perfectly convinced that you have no idle, no unemployed moments. Your indefatigable benevolence is incessantly occupied in good works; and your head and your heart make the utmost use of the excellent qualities of both. You have given proofs of the talents of one, and you certainly do not wrap the still more precious talent of the other in a napkin. Thank you a thousand times for your most ingenious plan; may great success reward you!

I sent one instantly to the Duchess of Gloucester, whose piety and zeal imitate yours at a distance; but she says she cannot afford to subscribe just at this severe moment, when the poor so much want her assistance, but she will on the thaw, and should have been flattered by receiving a plan from yourself. I sent another to Lord Harcourt, who, I trust, will show it to a much greater lady; and I repeated

some of the facts you told me of the foul fiends, and their anti-*More* activity. I sent to Mr. White for half a dozen more of your plans, and will distribute them wherever I have hopes of their taking root and blossoming. To-morrow I will send him my subscription;¹ and I flatter myself you will not think it a breach of Sunday, nor will I make this long, that I may not widen that fracture. Good-night! How calm and comfortable must your slumbers be on the pillow of every day's good deeds!

Monday.

Yesterday was dark as midnight. Oh! that it may be the darkest day in all respects that we shall see! But these are themes too voluminous and dismal for a letter, and which your zeal tells me you feel too intensely for me to increase, when you are doing all in your power to counteract them. One of my grievances is, that the sanguinary inhumanity of the times has almost poisoned one's compassion, and makes one abhor so many thousands of our own species, and rejoice when they suffer for their crimes. I could feel no pity on reading the account of the death of Condorcet (if true, though I doubt it). He was one of the greatest monsters exhibited by history; and is said to have poisoned himself from famine and fear of the guillotine; and would be a new instance of what I suggested to you for a tract, to show, that though we must not assume a pretension to judging of divine judgments, yet we may believe that the economy of Providence has so disposed causes and consequences, that such villains as Danton, Robespierre, the Duke of Orleans, &c. &c. &c. do but dig pits for themselves. I will check myself, or I shall wander into the sad events of the last five years, down to the rage of party that has sacrificed Holland! What a fund for reflection and prophetic apprehension! May we have as much wisdom and courage to stem our malevolent enemies, as it is plain, to our lasting honour, we have had charity to the French emigrants, and have bounty for the poor who are suffering in this dreadful season!

¹ To the fund for promoting the printing and dispersion of the works sold at the Cheap Repository.

Adieu, thou excellent woman ! thou reverse of that hyæna in petticoats, Mrs. Wolstoncroft, who to this day discharges her ink and gall on Maria Antoinette, whose unparalleled sufferings have not yet stanchèd that Alecto's blazing ferocity. Adieu ! adieu ! Yours from my heart.

P. S. I have subscribed five guineas at Mr. White's to your plan.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 13, 1795.

I RECEIVED your letter and packet of lays and virelays, and heartily wish they may fall in bad ground, and produce a hundred thousand fold, as I doubt is necessary. How I admire the activity of your zeal and perseverance ! Should a new church ever be built, I hope in a side chapel there will be an altar dedicated to St. Hannah, Virgin and Martyr ; and that your pen, worn to the bone, will be enclosed in a golden reliquaire, and preserved on the shrine.

These few words I have been forced to dictate, having had the gout in my right hand above this fortnight ; but I trust it is going off. The Duchess was much pleased with your writing to her, and ordered me to thank you. Your friend Lady Waldegrave is in town, and looks very well. Adieu, best of women ! Yours most cordially.¹

¹ In a letter to her sister, dated from Fulham Palace, Miss More says, —“ Lord Orford has presented me with Bishop Wilson's edition of the Bible, in three volumes quarto, superbly bound in morocco (Oh ! that he would himself study that blessed book), to which, in the following most flattering inscription, he attributes my having done far more good than is true—

To his excellent friend,
MISS HANNAH MORE,
THE BOOK,
which he knows to be the dearest object of her study,
and by which,
to the great comfort and relief
of numberless afflicted and distressed individuals,
she has profited beyond any person with whom he is acquainted,
is offered,
as a mark of his esteem and gratitude,
by her sincere
and obliged humble servant,
HORACE, EARL OF ORFORD,
1795.”

TO WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, April 4, 1795.

To judge of my satisfaction and gratitude on receiving the very acceptable present of your book,¹ Sir, you should have known my extreme impatience for it from the instant Mr. Edwards had kindly favoured me with the first chapters. You may consequently conceive the mortification I felt at not being able to thank you immediately both for the volume and the obliging letter that accompanied it, by my right arm and hand being swelled and rendered quite immoveable and useless, of which you will perceive the remains if you can read these lines which I am forcing myself to write, not without pain, the first moment I have power to hold a pen; and it will cost me some time, I believe, before I can finish my whole letter, earnest as I am, Sir, to give a loose to my gratitude.

If you ever had the pleasure of reading such a delightful book as your own, imagine, Sir, what a comfort it must be to receive such an anodyne in the midst of a fit of the gout that has already lasted above nine weeks, and which at first I thought might carry me to Lorenzo de' Medici before he should come to me!

The complete volume has more than answered the expectations which the sample had raised. The Grecian simplicity of the style is preserved throughout; the same judicious candour reigns in every page; and without allowing yourself that liberty of indulging your own bias towards good or against criminal characters, which over-rigid critics prohibit, your artful candour compels your readers to think with you, without seeming to take a part yourself. You have shown from his own virtues, abilities, and heroic spirit, why Lorenzo deserved to have Mr. Roscoe for his biographer. And since you have been so, Sir, (for he was not completely known before, at least not out of Italy,) I shall be extremely mistaken if he is not henceforth allowed to

¹ His History of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.

be, in various lights, one of the most excellent and greatest men with whom we are well acquainted, especially if we reflect on the shortness of his life and the narrow sphere in which he had to act. Perhaps I ought to blame my own ignorance, that I did not know Lorenzo as a beautiful poet: I confess I did not. Now I do, I own I admire some of his sonnets more than several — yes, even of Petrarch; for Lorenzo's are frequently more clear, less *alembiqués*, and not inharmonious as Petrarch's often are from being too crowded with words, for which room is made by numerous elisions, which prevent the softening alternacy of vowels and consonants. That thicket of words was occasioned by the embarrassing nature of the sonnet; a form of composition I do not love, and which is almost intolerable in any language but Italian, which furnishes such a profusion of rhymes. To our tongue the sonnet is mortal, and the parent of insipidity. The imitation in some degree of it was extremely noxious to a true poet, our Spenser; and he was the more injudicious by lengthening his stanza in a language so barren of rhymes as ours, and in which several words, whose terminations are of similar sounds, are so rugged, uncouth, and unmusical. The consequence was, that many lines which he forced into the service to complete the quota of his stanza are unmeaning, or silly, or tending to weaken the thought he would express.

Well, Sir: but if you have led me to admire the compositions of Lorenzo, you have made me intimate with another poet, of whom I had never heard nor had the least suspicion; and who, though writing in a less harmonious language than Italian, outshines an able master of that country, as may be estimated by the fairest of all comparisons — which is, when one of each nation versifies the same ideas and thoughts.

That novel poet I boldly pronounce is Mr. Roscoe. Several of his translations of Lorenzo are superior to the originals, and the verses more poetic; nor am I bribed to give this opinion by the present of your book, nor by any partiality, nor by the surprise of finding so pure a writer of history as able a poet. Some good judges to whom I have

shown your translations entirely agree with me. I will name one most competent judge, Mr. Hoole, so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian, as he has proved by a translation of Ariosto. That I am not flattering you, Sir, I will demonstrate; for I am not satisfied with one essential line in your version of the most beautiful, I think, of all Lorenzo's stanzas. It is his description of Jealousy, in page 268, equal, in my humble opinion, to Dryden's delineations of the Passions, and the last line of which is—

Mai dorme, ed ostinata a se sol crede.

The thought to me is quite new, and your translation I own does not come up to it. Mr. Hoole and I hammered at it, but could not content ourselves. Perhaps by altering your last couplet you may enclose the whole sense, and make it equal to the preceding six.

I will not ask your pardon, Sir, for taking so much liberty with you. You have displayed so much candour and so much modesty, and are so free from pretensions, that I am confident you will allow that truth is the sole ingredient that ought to compose deserved incense; and if ever commendation was sincere, no praise ever flowed with purer veracity than all I have said in this letter does from the heart of, Sir, your infinitely obliged humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1795.

I will write a word to you, though scarce time to write one, to thank you for your great kindness about the soldier, who shall get a substitute if he can. As you are, or have been in town, your daughter will have told you in what a bustle I am, preparing—not to resist, but to receive an invasion of royalties to-morrow; and cannot even escape them like Admiral Cornwallis, though seeming to make a semblance; for I am to wear a sword, and have appointed two aides-de-camp, my nephews, George and Horace Churchill.

If I *fall*, as ten to one but I do, to be sure it will be a superb tumble, at the feet of a Queen and eight daughters of Kings; for, besides the six Princesses, I am to have the Duchess of York and the Princess of Orange! Woe is me, at seventy-eight, and with scarce a hand and foot to my back! Adieu! Yours, &c. A POOR OLD REMNANT.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1795.

I AM not dead of fatigue with my royal visitors, as I expected to be, though I was on my poor lame feet three whole hours. Your daughter, who kindly assisted me in doing the honours, will tell you the particulars, and how prosperously I succeeded. The Queen was uncommonly condescending and gracious, and deigned to drink my health when I presented her with the last glass, and to thank me for all my attentions. Indeed my memory *de la vieille cour* was but once in default. As I had been assured that her Majesty would be attended by her chamberlain, yet was not, I had no glove ready when I received her at the step of her coach: yet she honoured me with her hand to lead her up stairs; nor did I recollect my omission when I led her down again. Still, though gloveless, I did not squeeze the royal hand, as Vice-chamberlain Smith did to Queen Mary.¹

You will have stared, as I did, at the Elector of Hanover deserting his ally the King of Great Britain, and making peace with the monsters. But Mr. Fawkener, whom I saw at my sister's on Sunday, laughs at the article in the newspapers, and says it is not an unknown practice for stock-jobbers to hire an emissary at the rate of five hundred pounds, and dispatch to Franckfort, whence he brings forged attestations of some marvellous political event, and spreads it

¹ It is said that Queen Mary asked some of her attendant ladies what a squeeze of the hand was supposed to intimate. They said, "Love." "Then," said the Queen, "my Vice-chamberlain must be violently in love with me, for he always squeezes my hand."

on 'Change, which produces such a fluctuation in the stocks as amply overpays the expense of his mission.

This was all I learnt in the single night I was in town. I have not read the new French constitution, which seems longer than probably its reign will be. The five sovereigns will, I suppose, be the first guillotined. Adieu! Yours ever.

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, Aug. 16, 1796.

THOUGH I this morning received your Sunday's full letter, it is three o'clock before I have a moment to begin answering it; and must do it myself, for Kirgate is not at home. First came in Mr. Barrett, and then Cosway, who has been for some days at Mr. Udney's, with his wife: she is so afflicted for her only little girl, that she shut herself up in her chamber, and would not be seen.¹ The man Cosway does not seem to think that much of the loss belonged to him: he romanced with his usual vivacity. Next arrived Dr. Burney, on his way to Mrs. Boscawen. He asked me about deplorable "Camilla." Alas! I had not recovered of it enough to be loud in its praise. I am glad, however, to hear that she has realized about two thousand pounds; and the worth, no doubt, of as much in honours at Windsor; where she was detained three days, and where even M. D'Arblay was allowed to dine.

I rejoice at your bathing promising so well. If the beautiful fugitive² from Brighthelmstone dips too, the waves will be still more salutary:—

Venus, orta mari, mare præstat eunti.

I like your going to survey castles and houses: it is wholesomer than drawing and writing tomes of letters;—which, you see, I cannot do.

¹ The loss of her only child threw Mrs. Cosway upon art once more. To mitigate her grief, she painted several large pictures for chapels; and afterwards visited Italy, where she formed a college at Lodi for the education of young ladies. On the establishment of peace, she returned to England, where she remained till the death of her husband in 1821; after which she returned to Lodi.—E.

² The Countess of Jersey, mother to the present Earl.

Wednesday, after breakfast.

When I came home from Lady Mendip's last night, I attempted to finish this myself; but my poor fingers were so tired by all the work of the day, that it will require Sir William Jones's gift of tongues to interpret my pot-hooks. One would think Arabic characters were catching; for Agnes had shown me a volume of their poems, finely printed at Cambridge, with a version which Mrs. Douglas had lent to her, and said were very simple, and not in the inflated style of the East. You shall judge: in the first page I opened, I found a storm of lightning that had burst into a laugh. I resume the thread of my letter. You had not examined Arundel Castle enough; for you do not mention the noble monuments, in alabaster, of the Fitz-Alans, one of whom bragged of having married Adeliza, widow of Henry the First. In good sooth, they were somewhat defaced by Cromwell having mounted his cannon on the roof to batter the castle; of which, when I saw it, he had left little but ruins; and they were choked up by a vile modern brick house, which I know Solomon has pulled down: for he came hither two years ago to consult me about Gothicizing his restoration of the castle. I recommended Mr. Wyat, lest he should copy the temple of Jerusalem.

So you found a picture of your predecessor!¹ She had had a good figure: but I had rather it had been a portrait of her aunt, Mrs. Arabella Fermor, the heroine of the Lock, of whom I never saw a resemblance. You did not, I suppose, see the giant, who, the old Duke told me, used to walk among the ruins, but who, to be sure, Duke Solomon² has laid in a Red Sea of claret. There are other splendid seats to be seen within your reach; as Petworth, and Standstead, and Up-Park: but I know why I guess that you may even be of parties, more than once, at the last.

¹ A portrait of Margaret Trefusis, Countess of Orford, widow of the eldest brother of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford.

² Charles Howard, eleventh Duke of Norfolk, so called by Lord Orford, for having his portrait executed in painted glass for the window of his great dining-room, at Arundel Castle, as Solomon entertaining the Queen of Sheba.

As Agnes says, she has promised I should give you an account of a visit I have lately had, I will, if I have time, before anybody comes in. It was from a Mr. Pentycross, a clergyman and schoolmaster of Wallingford, of whom I had heard nothing for eight-and-twenty years; and then having only known him as a Blue-coat boy from Kingston: and how that happened, he gave me this account last week. He was born with a poetic impetus, and walked over hither with a copy of verses by no means despicable, which he begged old Margaret to bring up to me. She refused; he supplicated. At last she told him that her master was very learned, and that, if he would write something in the learned languages, especially in French, she would present his poem to me. In the mean time, she yielded; I saw him, and let her show him the house. I think he sent me an ode or two afterwards, and I never heard his name again till this winter, when I received a letter from him from his place of residence, with high compliments on some of my editions, and beseeching me to give him a print of myself, which I did send to him. In the Christmas holidays he came to town for a few days, and called in Berkeley-square; but it was when I was too ill to see anybody. He then left a most modest and humble letter, only begging that, some time or other, I would give him leave to see Strawberry Hill. I sent him a note by Kirgate, that should he come to town in summer, and I should be well enough, he should certainly see my house. Accordingly, about a fortnight ago, I let him know, that if he could fix any day in this month, I would give him a dinner and a bed. He jumped at the offer, named Wednesday last, and came. However, I considered that to pass a whole day with this unknown being might be rather too much. I got Lysons, the parson, from Putney, to meet him: but it would not have been necessary, for I found my Blue-coat boy grown to be a very sensible, rational, learned, and remaining a most modest personage, with an excellent taste for poetry—for he is an enthusiast for Dr. Darwin: but, alas! infinitely too learned for me; for in the evening, upon questioning him about his own vein of poetry, he humbly drew out a paper, with proposition forty-seven of

Euclid turned into Latin verse. I shrunk back and cried, "Oh! dear Sir, how little you know me! I have forgotten almost the little Latin I knew, and was always so incapable of learning mathematics, that I could not even get by heart the multiplication-table, as blind Professor Sanderson honestly told me, above threescore years ago, when I went to his lectures at Cambridge." After the first fortnight, he said to me, "Young man, it would be cheating you to take your money; for you never can learn what I am trying to teach you." I was exceedingly mortified, and cried; for, being a prime minister's son, I had firmly believed all the flattery with which I had been assured that my parts were capable of anything. I paid a private instructor for a year; but, at the year's end, was forced to own Sanderson had been in the right; and here luckily ends, with my paper, my Pentieru-sade!

TO MISS BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, August 24, 1796.

BATHE ON, bathe on and wash away all your complaints; the sea air and such an oriental season must cure everything but positive decay and decrepitude. On me they have no more effect than they would have on an Egyptian queen who has been embowelled and preserved in her sycamore etui ever since dying was first invented, and people notwithstanding liked to last for ever, though even in a pyramid. In short, Mr. — has teased me so much about jumbling my relics, that I have aired them every morning in the coach for this fortnight; and yet, you see,¹ I cannot write ten lines together! Lady Cecilia lets me call on her at twelve, and take her with me: and yet I grow tired of it, and shall not have patience to continue, but shall remain, I believe, in my mummyhood. I begin by giving myself a holiday to-day, in order to answer your letter of the 21st; while Lady Waldegrave, who is with me, and who has brought her eldest son, whom, poor soul!

¹ The remainder of this letter is in the hand-writing of Kirgate.

she cannot yet bear to call Lord Waldegrave, is gone to the Pavilion. Here is a letter for you from Hannah More, unsealed indeed, for chiefly *à mon intention*. Be so good as to tell her how little I am really recovered; but that I will hammer out a few words as fast, that is, as slowly as I can to her, in return.

I am scandalized at the slovenly neglect of the brave chapel of the Fitz-Alans.¹ I thought the longer any peer's genealogy had been spun out, the prouder he was of the most ancient coronets in it; but since Solomon despises the Arundels for not having been dukes, I suppose he does not acknowledge Adam for a relation; who, though he had a tolerably numerous progeny, his grace does not allow to have been the patriarch of the Mowbrays and Howards, as the devil did not make Eve a duchess, though he has made the wives of some other folks so, and may propose to make one more so some time or other.

News I have none; but that Wurmsur seems to have put a little spoke into the wheel of the French triumphal car in Italy: and as those banditti have deigned to smile on the Duke of Wirtemberg, I suppose they mean to postpone imposing a heavy contribution on him till he shall have received the fortune of the Princess Royal. Adieu!

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, August 29, 1796.

You are not only the most beneficent, but the most benevolent of human beings. Not content with being a perfect saint yourself, which (forgive me for saying) does not always imply prodigious compassion for others; not satisfied with being the most disinterested, nay, the reverse of all patriots, for you sacrifice your very slender fortune, not to improve it, but to keep the poor honest instead of corrupting them; and you write politics as simply, intelligibly, and un-

¹ In Arundel church. It has since been put in a state of repair by the present Duke of Norfolk.

artfully, not as cunningly as you can to mislead. Well, with all these giant virtues, you can find room and time in your heart and occupations for harbouring and exercising what those monkeys of pretensions, the French, invented and called *les petites morales*, which were to supply society with filigrain duties, in the room of all virtues, which they abolished on their road to the adoption of philosophy and atheism. Yes, though for ever busied in exercising services and charities for individuals, or for whole bodies of people, you do not leave a cranny empty into which you can slip a kindness. Your inquiry after me to Miss Berry is so friendly, that I cannot trust solely to her thanking you for your letter, as I am sure she will, having sent it to her as she is bathing in the sea at Bognor Rocks; but I must with infinite gratitude give you a brief account of myself—a very poor one indeed must I give. Condemned as a cripple to my couch for the rest of my days I doubt I am. Though perfectly healed, and even without a scar, my leg is so weakened that I have not recovered the least use of it, nor can move cross my chamber unless lifted up and held by two servants. This constitutes me totally a prisoner. But why should not I be so? What business had I to live to the brink of seventy-nine? And why should one litter the world at that age? Then, I thank God, I have vast blessings; I have preserved my eyes, ears, and teeth; I have no pain left; and I would bet with any dormouse that it cannot outsleep me. And when one can afford to pay for every relief, comfort, or assistance that can be procured at fourscore, dares one complain? Must not one reflect on the thousands of old poor, who are suffering martyrdom, and have none of those alleviations? O my good friend, I must consider myself as at my best; for if I drag on a little longer, can I expect to remain even so tolerably. Nay, does the world present a pleasing scene? Are not the devils escaped out of the swine, and overrunning the earth headlong? What a theme for meditation, that the excellent humane Louis Seize should have been prevented from saving himself by that monster Drouet, and that that execrable wretch should be saved

even by those, some of whom one may suppose he meditated to massacre; for at what does a Frenchman stop? But I will quit this shocking subject, and for another reason too: I omitted one of my losses, almost the use of my fingers: they are so lame that I cannot write a dozen lines legibly, but am forced to have recourse to my secretary. I will only reply by a word or two to a question you seem to ask; how I like “Camilla?” I do not care to say how little. Alas! she has reversed experience, which I have long thought reverses its own utility by coming at the wrong end of our life when we do not want it. This author knew the world and penetrated characters before she had stepped over the threshold; and, now she has seen so much of it, she has little or no insight at all: perhaps she apprehended having seen too much, and kept the bags of foul air that she brought from the Cave of Tempests too closely tied.

Adieu, thou who mightest be one of the cleverest of women if thou didst not prefer being *one* of the best! And when I say *one* of the best, I have not engaged my vote for the second. Yours most gratefully.

TO RICHARD GOUGH, ESQ.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 5, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

BEING struck with the extreme cold of last week, it has brought a violent gouty inflammation into one of my legs, and I was forced to be instantly brought to town very ill. As soon as I was a little recovered, I found here your most magnificent present of the second volume of Sepulchral Monuments, the most splendid work I ever saw, and which I congratulate myself on having lived long enough to see. Indeed, I congratulate my country on its appearance exactly at so illustrious a moment, when the patriotism and zeal of London have exhibited so astonishing marks of their opulence and attachment to the constitution, by a voluntary subscription of seventeen millions of money in three days.

Your book, Sir, appearing at that very instant, will be a monument of a fact so unexampled in history; the treasure of fine prints with which it is stowed, well becomes such a production and such a work, the expense of which becomes it too. I am impatient to be able to sit up and examine it more, and am sure my gratitude will increase in proportion. As soon as I shall receive the complete sheets, I will have the whole work bound in the most superb manner that can be: and though, being so infirm now, and just entered into my eightieth year, I am not likely to wait on you, and thank you, I shall be happy to have an opportunity, whenever you come this way, of telling you in person how much I am charmed with so splendid a monument of British glories, and which will be so proud an ornament to the libraries of any nation.

TO MISS BERRY.

Thursday, December 15, past noon, 1796.

I HAD no account of you at all yesterday, but in Mrs. Damer's letter, which was rather better than the preceding; nor have I had any letter before post to-day, as you promised me in hers. I had, indeed, a humorous letter from a puss that is about your house,¹ which is more comfortable; as I think she would not have written cheerfully if you had not been in a good way. I would answer it, but I am grown a dull old Tabby, and have no "Quips and cranks and wanton wiles" left; but I shall be glad to see her when she follows you to town, which I earnestly hope will not pass Saturday. My horses will be with you on Friday night.

The House of Commons sat till half an hour after three this morning, on Mr. Pitt's loan to the Emperor; when it was approved by a majority of above two hundred. Mr. Fox was more temperate than was expected; Mr. Grey did not

¹ This was written by Miss Seton, in the name of a kitten at Little Strawberry Hill, with whose gambols Lord Orford had been much amused.—M. B.

speaking; Mr. Sheridan was very entertaining: several were convinced and voted for Mr. Pitt, who had gone down determined against it. The Prince came to town t'other day ill, was blooded twice, but has now a strong eruption upon his skin, which will probably be of great service to him. Sir Charles Blagden has been with the Duchess of Devonshire, and found her much better than he expected. Her look is little altered: she suffers but little, and finds herself benefited by being electrified.

I have received a compliment to-day very little expected by a superannuated old Etonian. Two tickets from the gentlemen of Westminster School, for their play on Monday next. I excused myself as civilly and respectfully as I could, on my utter impossibility of attending them. Adieu! I hope this will be the last letter I shall write before I see you.¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF OSSORY.

January 13, 1797.

You distress me infinitely by showing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse anybody. My old-

¹ Very soon after the date of the above letter, the gout, the attacks of which were every day becoming more frequent and longer, made those with whom Lord Orford had been living at Strawberry Hill very anxious that he should remove to Berkeley Square, to be nearer assistance, in case of any sudden seizure. As his correspondents, soon after his removal, were likewise established in London, no more letters passed between them. When not immediately suffering from pain, his mind was tranquil and cheerful. He was still capable of being amused, and of taking some part in conversation: but, during the last weeks of his life, when fever was superadded to his other ills, his mind became subject to the cruel hallucination of supposing himself neglected and abandoned by the only persons to whom his memory clung, and whom he always desired to see. In vain they recalled to his recollection how recently they had left him, and how short had been their absence: it satisfied him for the moment, but the same idea recurred as soon as he had lost sight of them. At last, nature sinking under the exhaustion of weakness, obliterated all ideas but those of mere existence, which ended, without a struggle, on the 2nd of March 1797.—M. B.

fashioned breeding impels me every now and then to reply to the letters you honour me with writing; but in truth very unwillingly, for I seldom can have anything particular to say. I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three very private places, where I see nobody that really knows anything; and what I learn comes from newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses—consequently, what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders, except about fourscore nephews and nieces of various ages, who are each brought to me once a year, to stare at me as the Methusalem of the family; and they can only speak of their own contemporaries, which interest me no more than if they talked of their dolls, or bats and balls. Must not the result of all this, Madam, make me a very entertaining correspondent? and can such letters be worth showing? or can I have any spirit when so old, and reduced to dictate? Oh! my good Madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shown. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel, and stuck on twelfth-cakes that lie on the shop-boards of pastrycooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust. Till then, pray, Madam, accept the resignation of your ancient servant,

ORFORD.

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